MEMOIRS

OF THE

HOUSE OF MEDICI,

FROM ITS ORIGIN TO THE DEATH OF FRANCESCO,
THE SECOND GRAND DUKE OF TUSCANY,

AND OF THE

GREAT MEN WHO FLOURISHED IN TUSCANY
WITHIN THAT PERIOD.

From the FRENCH of M^r. TENHOVE,

WITH

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS,

BY SIR RICHARD CLAYTON, BART.

VOL. I.

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COSMVS MEDICES. P.P.

TO THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWN.

MY LORD,

I TAKE the Liberty of introducing to the Public, under the Honour of your Name, the Memoirs of an illustrious Family, which was peculiarly distinguished by its Protection of Literature, Arts and Sciences.——The Subject will not want any Recommendation to your Lordship.——To you Genius and Science are indebted for the same Encouragement.——In this Address I follow therefore the Dictates of the strictest Propriety, whilst I have a real Pleasure in subscribing myself

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most faithful humble Servant,

RICHARD CLAYTON.

ADLINGTON,
AUGUST 25, 1797.

PREFACE.

"MR. NICHOLAS TENHOVE, the Author of the following Work, was a Branch of one of the most respectable Families in the United Provinces. His Paternal Ancestors were all high in Office, and eminently distinguished by their Virtues and their Political Capacity and Talents; and by his Mother he descended from the Family of Fagel, which had furnished the Dutch Republic with illustrious Ministers through several Generations.—Though his Father died in the prime of Life, and he was thus deprived of an excellent Model and a sure Guide, both in the Paths of Virtue and Science, yet his Education was not neglected, and in the Circle of his Relations and Friends, but above all, in his own innate Love of useful and elegant Knowledge he found abundant Incitements to Literary Pursuits. He discovered early a predominate Taste for Classical Knowledge, Modern Languages, and the Fine Arts, and nothing could exceed the Sensibility with which he felt

"the Sublime, the Beautiful, the Graceful, and the Ri-
"diculous, in all their Objects, Forms, and Modifica-
"tions. His fear of exhibiting the last in his own De-
"portment was so excessive, that it rendered him often
"uneasy, and sometimes, by Manners too carefully stu-
"died, exposed him to what he so anxiously wished to
"avoid. This was one of the Singularities in his Cha-
"racter, and in mixed Company and general Society it
"sometimes rendered him shy and timid; but in the
"small Circle of his intimate Friends and Acquaintances,
"where he was sure to meet with Indulgence and Affec-
"tion, his exquisite Wit and Humour had their free
"Course, made Laughter hold both his Sides, and were
"an inexhaustible Source of Entertainment to his Friends.

"An easy Fortune and a previous Stock of Classical
"and Historical Knowledge rendered him capable of
"deriving signal Advantages from his Travels in Italy
"and Sicily, where he observed the sublime and elegant
"Productions of Nature and Art with the Taste and En-
"thusiasm of an enlightened Connoisseur.—The Memoirs
"of the House of Medici were composed at his Ease—
"from Time to Time—and were printed Piece-meal as
"they were composed.—In the Form he left them they
"have

"have rather the aspect of interesting Materials for a "great Work than that of a regular Edifice.—As he did "not live to complete his Design, he committed to the "Flames all the Copies of these Memoirs, excepting those "which he had distributed to his particular Friends in "separate Parts as they came from the Press (a)."—From one of those Copies the Translation took its Rise.—It will be easily perceived such a desultory Work would not from its Nature admit of Elegance.—To borrow an Allusion from Mr. Tenhove, without a Presumption of being "the Eagle," I have often felt "the Iron Bars of "the Cage" in which I have been confined.—Some Passages have been transplanted from the Text into the Notes, and others have been wholly omitted, which seemed to carry the Reader too far out of his Way, and were not connected with what either preceded or followed them.—Many of the latter include the "Belgicisms and "Gallicisms," which their Author humourously acknowledges may be imputed to him; and as in all Probability he would have pared them away, if he had finished his Work, to fulfil what I have Reason to believe was his Wish, has been with me a Debt of Honour.—The Twenty-

(a) I am indebted to my worthy Friend Dr. Maclaine for this Account of Mr. Tenhove.

Twenty-six Books of the Original are thrown into Thirteen Chapters, on the Plan of Mr. Roscoe's valuable Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, called the Magnificent.—M^{r}. Tenhove's Sentiments have been given, I flatter myself, in general with Fidelity and Freedom; yet in a Work of such a Length, Errors and Mistakes are unavoidable.—The ablest Scholars are however the most candid and indulgent Critics, and they best know how to overlook the one, and pardon the other.

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CHAP. I.

ORIGIN of the House of Medici—Alterations in the Florentine Government—Giovanni de' Medici beheaded—The Duke of Athens proclaimed Sovereign—Besieged in his Palace, and obliged to abdicate the Government—An Insurrection, and Michele Lando chosen Gonfalonier—Michele Lando banished—Tragical Fate of Giovanni Buondelmonte—Tommaso D'Albizzi takes the lead in the Republic—Insurrection—Veri de' Medici—Conspiracy against Tommaso D'Albizzi—Antonio de' Medici executed—Giovanni de' Medici elected Gonfalonier—Mediates between the contending Parties—His Death—Cosmo de' Medici succeeds him—Rinaldo D'Albizzi at the Head of the Nobles—Cosmo de' Medici summoned before the Magistracy—Banished, with his Friends, to Padua—Returns in triumph—Severity of the Government—Death and Character of Rinaldo D'Albizzi—Neri Capponi—Luca Pitti—Death of Cosmo de' Medici His Character—Parallel between Cosmo de' Medici and Pericles—His Taste for Learning and Men of Letters—Capture of Constantinople, and its Consequences to the Arts, Sciences, and Learning—Greek Refugees settle at Florence—Advantages to Literature.

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THE history of one of the most illustrious families is attempted in the following work. A thousand delightful ideas burst upon the mind at the recollection of the name only of the House of Medici, and it will live for ever in the memory of mankind. The history of this family so fruitful in great events, full of examples worthy of our imitation, and of examples which ought to be avoided, (for the portrait has also its dark shades) a history connected with that of Tuscany, of the rest of Italy, and in some measure of the other states of Europe, but more particularly with the arts and sciences, with letters and philosophy, must have some interest, whatever hands may have been employed upon it. If the ingenuity necessary for the construction of an edifice equal to the brilliancy of the plan should be unfortunately wanting, there may be perhaps merit in collecting the materials, and some pleasure may be derived from the review

of a race of great men, whose peaceful laurels have more intrinsic value than the short and empty triumphs of the military hero.

Origin of the House of Medici.

The origin of the House of Medici loses itself in the obscurity of the middle age. Its first distinction is not of a very remote date, and does not reach beyond the fifteenth century. Though Renaud de Beaune, archbishop of Bourges, in his funeral oration on Catherine queen of France, endeavours to fetch from a vast distance the etymology of the name, we can scarcely suppose a more extravagant or ill founded conjecture, if we could suppose it to have been seriously entertained by the respectable prelate, the bosom friend of the president de Thou and of the chancellor de l' Hopital.

"Du temps que ce grand capitaine Gaulois, Brennus, "mena son armée par toute l' Italie et Grece, estants avec "luy en sa troupe deux gentils-hommes François, l' un "nommé Felonius, l' autre nomme Bono, qui, voyant le "mauvois dessein que prennoit Brennus, aprés ses belles "conquestes, d'aller envahir le temple de Delphe, pour se "souiller soy et son armée du sacrilege de ce temple, ils se "retirerent tous deux et s'en allerent en Asie, avec leurs "vaisseaux et hommes, où ils pénétrerent si avant, qu'ils "entrerent en la terre des Medes, qui est proche la Lydie "et de la Perside ; où ayant fait plusieurs conquestes, et "obtenu de grandes victoires, se seroient enfin retirez ; "et passants par Italie, espérants de revenir en France.

"Felonius s' arresta dans un lieu, oú est á present situé "Florence, le long de fleuve d' Arné, qu'il reconnut as- "sez beau et délectable, et de semblable assiette qu'un "qui luy avoit pleu en ce pays de Medes une autrefois, "et y bastit une Citè, qui est aujourd'huy Florence; "comme aussi son compagnon Bono bastit la ville Bono- "nia, appellée Boulogne, toutes deux voisines: et des "lors, pour les conquestes et victoires que ce Felonius "avoit eu en ce pays des Medes, fut appellé Medicus "entre les siens, dont depuis le surnom a demeuré en la "famille; comme nous lisons de Paulus, qui fut surnom- "mé Macedonicus, pour avoir conquis la Macedoine "sur Perséus; et Scipion, qui fut appellé Affricanus, "pour avoit fait de mesme de l' Affrique (*a*)."

The credulous and lively writer, who has preserved this passage, adds very honestly, "Je ne scay d' ou a "pris cette histoire le dict Seigneur de Beaune, mais il est "vraisemblable que devant le roy et une telle assemblée "qui etoit a Blois pour le convoi de la reine, il ne l'eut "voulu alleguer sans bon auteur (*b*)." Had the arch-bishop advanced things even as probable as this tale is absurd and foolish, we might yet pause, before we trusted him with implicit confidence. His oration must still be remembered was a funeral oration, in which facts and cir-

(*a*) *Œuvres du Seigneur de Brantome, tom.* ii. *p.* 257. *8vo. Paris,* 1787.

(*b*) *Œuvres de Brantome, tom.* ii. *p.* 258.

circumstances are generally exaggerated, and it would be too dangerous to rely on works of mere imagination and parade.

The author of the Etruria Regalis hazards another conjecture, which in all likelihood will have as few advocates. "Si quis conjecturæ hic locus, divinare forte "non inidoneé possem. Etruscâ linguâ antiquâ Meddix "est magistratus supremus, testibus Sosipatro, Charisio, "Festo Pompeio, et Ennio in annalibus."

"Summus ibi capitur Meddix, occiditur alter (*c*)."

"Potuit sane accidisse, ut ex officio nomen familiæ sit "factum ut pluries: sed quis tam remota pro certis affe-"rat (*d*)."

Whatever may be the fate of such hypotheses, the annals of the middle age bear honourable testimony to the flourishing situation of the Medici, in Provence, Italy, and Greece. Their affinity to the Medici of Florence might be difficult to prove, but the Athenian family was solemnly acknowledged by one of the Grand Dukes of Tuscany.

Ceccarella, an Italian author, cites a manuscript chronicle, in which Ansaldo de'Medici is said to have settled at Florence, in 806, but the supposed attendance of Everardo

(*c*) *Ex* 8 *Annali. p.* 82. *4to. Amst.* 1707.
(*d*) *Dempster. tom.* ii. *p.* 461.

Everardo de' Medici in the court of Charlemagne, weakens its authority. A correct list of the noble Florentines, who had honours conferred on them by that monarch and his successors, is believed to have descended to us, and amidst the Fifanti, the Elisei, the de la Quona, and the Uberti, the Medici are not to be found.

The Abbe Longuerue, speaking of the grants of the eighth and twelfth centuries, considers a thousand out of every fifteen hundred as false or forged, and more than suspects the rest. Under such circumstances, an act of donation, by the emperor Conrad II. bearing date in the year 1207, and witnessed by an archbishop of Mayence, a count Palatine, Crescenzio of Rome, other courtiers, and amongst the number Giulio de' Medici, the Florentine, will not pass for very decisive evidence. Yet Ansaldo, Everardo, and Giulio de' Medici, may possibly have existed, whilst their connection with the Florentine House of Medici must remain very problematical, and more uncertain.

Filippo de' Medici was notwithstanding an undoubted branch of the Family.—Fiorano, in the valley of Mugello, at the foot of the Appennines, was the place of his residence in 1250, and from his known wisdom and consummate prudence, he was respected as the oracle of the Guelph party of the Canton. When the See of Rome had humbled the German emperors, and curtailed their power, Italy was split into two parties, divided by their wishes

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for the different sovereigns; and from the pretensions of an impostor and a tyrant, the Guelph and Ghibeline factions arose, which have been so famous in the Italian annals (*e*). The former were the slaves of the pope, the latter warm friends of the monarch.

Towards the middle of the thirteenth century, the Guelphs having obtained the principal authority at Florence, Filippo de' Medici, oppressed by the Ghibelines, retired to it for safety.—It became his country. He was enrolled amongst the citizens, and his title is confirmed by a stanza of Verini:

"Ex Appennino celsâque ex arce Mugelli
"Nobilitas Medicum Thuscam descendit in urbem (*f*)."

Filippo de' Medici died in 1258, and left by his wife Irene four sons, Rene, Everardo, surnamed Buonaggiunta, Clarissimo, and Galvan; Rene died without issue, Everardo in 1280, leaving three sons, Ardingho, Almanno, and Everardo. In 1296, Ardingho appears in the magistracy.

Florence,

(*e*) "Onde che fu il primo principe che cominciasse a sentire di quale importanza fussero le spirituali ferite; perche il papa fece un concilio a Roma, e privo, Enrico dell' imperio, e del regno. E alcuni popoli Italiani seguirono il Papa, e alcuni Enrico; il che fu seme degli nomini Guelfi e Ghibellini, acciochè l'Italia, mancate le Inondazioni barbare, fusse dalle guerre intestine lacerata."

Opere de Machiavelli, lib. 1. *p.* 21. *tom.* i. 4to. *Firenze,* 1782.

(*f*) *Verinus de Illust. Urb. Florent.*

Florence, an old Roman colony, destroyed by the Ostrogoths and restored by Charlemagne, remained a long time subject to his descendants and successors. During the troubles, it shot up into a republic, though its growth and first advances towards independence are enveloped in darkness and obscurity. Under the Guelphs and Ghibelines, it suffered in their violent contentions, but the union of the rival factions laid the foundations of its liberty. Twelve citizens, with the names of Anziani or Ancients, were elected to preside over the government, whose office was annual, and two foreigners were appointed judges, one of whom had the title of "Capitano di Popolo," and the other that of "Podesta (*g*)." Other sound regulations were framed, by which Florence soon arrived at a very high degree of power and credit. Its constitution, however, was short-lived, and its happiness almost momentary. Manfredi, king of Naples, attacked the Florentines, conquered them, and in the public ruin every vestige of their liberties and freedom vanished.— Manfredi's death loosened their chains. Twelve (*h*) magistrates,

Alterations in the Florentine government.

(*g*) "Divisero pertanto la città in sei parti, ed elessero dodici cittadini due per Sesto che la governassero, I quali si chiamassero Anziani, e ciascuno anno si variassero. E per levar via le cagioni delle inimicizie, che dai giudici nascono, provvidono a due giudici forestieri, chiamato l' uno Capitano di popolo, e l' altro Podesta, che le cause così civili come criminali tra i cittadini occorrenti giudicassero."

Opere de Machiavelli, lib. 2. p. 60. tom. i.

(*h*) The city itself was to have been reduced to a heap of ruins, and in order to secure, it had been determined to destroy. A citizen of the name of Farinata Uberti with unshaken virtue and intrepidity alone opposed the barbarous in-

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trates, with the names of "Buonomini," were again elected, who went out of office every two months; and the establishment of several as well as numerous councils, inclined (*i*) the balance towards democracy. Yet one inherent vice, one radical error still subsisted, and that was the want of real liberty. The pope had, in fact, been the master of Florence, which he governed by his vicars and his legates. Such are the vicissitudes, which conduct us to the year 1282, when the appointment of the "Priori" took

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tention. "Fece costui un concilio di Ghibellini a Empoli, dove per ciascuno is concluse, che a voler mantenere potente la parte Ghibellina in Toscana era necessario disfare Firenze, sola atta per avere il popolo Guelfo a far ripigliare le forze alle parti della Chiesa. A questa si crudel Sentenza data contra ad una sì nobil città non fu cittadino ne amico, eccetto che Messer Farinata degli Uberti, che si opponesse; il quale appertamente e senza alcun rispetto la difese, dicendo non avere con tanta fatica corsi tanti pericoli, se non per potere nella sua patria abitare, e che non era allora per non voler quello che già avea cerco, nè per rifiutar quello che dalla fortuna gli era stato dato, anzi per essere non minor nimico di coloro, che disegnassero altrimenti, che si fusse stato ai Guelfi, e se di loro alcuno temeva della sua patria, la rovinasse, perchè sperava con quella virtù che ne aveva cacciati i Guelfi diffenderla." *Opere de Machiavelli, lib.* 2. *p.* 62. *tom.* i.

It is unnecessary perhaps to add in the words of the great historian, "Era Messer Farinata, uomo di grande animo."

(*i*) "Elessero dodici per capi, i quali sedessero in magistrato due mesi, quali non chiamarono Anziani, ma Buonomini; appresso a questi un consiglio di ottanta cittadini, il quale chiamavano la Credenza, dopo questo erano 180, popolani, trenta per Sesto, i quali con la Credenza, e i dodici Buonomini si chiamavano il Consiglio generale. Ordinarono ancora un altro Consiglio di 120 uomini, cittadini popolani e nobili, per il quale si dava perfezione a tutte le corse negli altri Consigli deliberate e con quello distribuivano gli uffici della republica."
Opere de Machiavelli, lib. 2. *p.* 65. *tom.* i.

took place, who were, on their first institution, three citizens chosen from the magistrates, that went out of office every two months. The number afterwards was augmented to nine, and at last increased to twelve (*a*). A palace was built for their reception, officers and guards appointed to distinguish and protect them, and they had the titles of "Signori" or Lords.

Almanno, brother of the prior Ardingho, left two sons, Giovanni, and the celebrated Salvestro.

Everardo the II. the third son of Everardo the I. was the Gonfalonier of Justice in 1301, nearly on the creation of the dignity. In every state where the lowest ranks of the community are intrusted with the civil offices, the nobles are apt to believe themselves above the laws; and the Florentine nobility were both guilty of great excesses, and escaped their punishment.—To correct these flagrant abuses an ordinance passed, declaring every

(*a*) The number of these magistrates, according to Machiavel, fluctuated between three and eight, and only by accident extended to twelve, "in luogo dei 14, si creassero tre cittadini, che si chiamassero Priori, e stessero due mesi al governo della repubblica, e potessero essere popolani e grandi, purchè fussero mercatanti o facessero arti. Ridussongli dopo il primo magistrato a sei, acciochè di qualunque Sesto ne fusse uno, il qual numero si mantenne infino al 1342, che ridussero la città a quartieri, e i Priori a otto, non ostante che in quel mezzo di tempo alcuna volta per qualche accidente ne facessero dodici."

Machiavelli, lib. 2. p. 67. tom. i.

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This appointment gave him almost unlimitted and sovereign authority, but the shortness of its duration rendered its power and its grandeur less offensive, and less formidable. This mode of government, under a Gonfalonier and Priors, continued till the year 1532, when a new political system was introduced, and the Florentine republic, after repeated struggles and many painful agonies, breathed its last convulsive sigh in the arms of Alessandro de' Medici.

Everardo, the Gonfalonier, left two sons, Bicci and Giovenci, by his consort Mandina Arigucci, one of the Florentine nobility, which was originally comprised in three distinct ranks. The first were in possession of signories and vassals, and they had the title of "Nobili di Signori." The second had the right of erecting towers to their palaces, and from that circumstance were styled, "Nobili di Torre." Lodges or porticos decorated the houses of the third order, and they were termed "Nobili di Loggia." A few of the principal families united

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these different privileges, and amongst them were the Arigucci, who were nobles "di Signori et di Torre."

The poet Dante makes honourable mention of the Arigucci (*b*) in the sixteenth canto of his Paradise, where his ancestor reckons up the most illustrious citizens of Florence. The Guelph interest was the interest they supported, and in the subsequent troubles of the Bianchi and the Neri, or the black and white factions, they espoused the latter. Everardo de' Medici's alliance with the Arigucci family influenced the Medici, and as the citizens in common were under the necessity of following the example of the nobles, and attaching themselves to one of the contending factions, the Medici and Giugni joined their influence with the legate Du Prat (*c*) in favour of the Bianchi, who were banished. Dante was of the exiled party, and he suffered with his friends, but his vengeance does not yet sleep, and will only be forgotten, when his native language ceases to exist.

Clarissimo,

(*b*) "Lo ceppo di che nacquero Calfucci
Era gia grande, e gia erano tratti
Alle Curule Sizii, ed ARIGUCCI."
Dante del Paradiso, canto 16. 106—109.

(*c*) "E i primi di quelli che muovevano lo scandalo, erano i Medici e Giugni, i quali in favor de ribelli s' erano con il Legato scoperti."
Machiavelli, lib. 2. *p.* 80. *tom.* i.

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Clarissimo, the third son of Filippo de' Medici, was the father of Giovanni, and grandfather of Bernardo, who left Giacopo, Giovanni, Maria and Bartolomeo.

In the year 1331, Giovanni quietly took possession of the little village of Barga, in the name of his fellow-citizens. The Florentines enriched by commerce, were then in the habit of acquiring these easy conquests. Mastino Della Scala, prince of Verona, had made himself the master of Lucca, and apprehensive that he should be deprived of it by force, he determined to sell it. Florence and Pisa were the competitors, but the former offering a higher price, it was ceded to it, and annexed to its dominions. The purchase was attended with peculiar satisfaction, as some years previous to this event, Lucca, when under the government of Castruccio Castruccani, one of the greatest men modern Italy has to boast of, had alarmed Florence so much as even to render her political existence doubtful. Giovanni de' Medici, who had been twice at the head of the magistracy, was unfortunately named with two other citizens, and charged with a commission to take possession of the new territories. Though able magistrates they were not generals, and suffering themselves to be surprised by the inhabitants of Pisa, Gualtieri de Brienne, the titular duke of Athens, and governor of Florence, ordered

Giovanni de' Medici surprised, and afterwards beheaded.

ordered them to be beheaded on the pretext of negligence or treason (*d*).

Maria de' Medici, the brother of Giovanni, was Gonfalonier in 1354.—Their youngest brother Bartolomeo left one son, Antonio.

Galvano, fourth son of Filippo de' Medici, was the father of Enrico, prior in 1299, who left a son Francesco.

The Duke of Athens proclaimed sovereign.–Besieged, and obliged to abdicate the government.

The fate of the three commissioners, with other acts of severity and violence opened to the duke of Athens the road to absolute power. He caused himself to be proclaimed sovereign, but his reign was short. Various plots were formed against him, and the Medici, from a high sense of their personal injuries, took the lead in one of these conspiracies.—The duke was besieged in his palace, was first obliged to give up his ministers (*e*), then

(*d*) Machiavel expressly says the Duke's ambition was to reign, "Per darsi riputazione di severo e giusto, e per questa via accrescersi grazia nella plebe, quelli che avevano amministrata la guerra di Lucca perseguitava, ed a Messer Giovanni de' Medici, Naddo Rucellai, e Guglielmo Altoviti tolse la vita e molti in esilio, e molti in danari ne condannò." *Machiavelli, lib.* 2. *p.* 99, 100. *tom.* i.

(*e*) Furono Messer Guglielmo e il figliuolo posti tra le migliaja de' nemici loro, e il figliuolo non aveva ancora diciotto anni. Nondimeno l' età, la forma, l' innocenza sua non la potè dalla furia della moltitudine salvare; e quelli che non poterono ferirgli vivi gli ferirono morti, nè saziati di straziarti con il ferro, con le mani, e

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then to abdicate the government, and afterwards to fly. —In his exile he received the constableship of France, and fell at the battle of Creci (*f*). Fourteen citizens, and amongst them Francesco de' Medici were authorised to new model the government. The people in common were admitted to a share in it, at which the proud spirit of the nobles revolted, and on their attempting to recover their former consequence, their opponents had recourse to arms, and Francesco de' Medici with his family were the first in the insurrection. Their party forced the posts and barricadoes of the nobility, their lodges and porticos were demolished, and with an ungovernable fury, the stately and insulting towers they had erected,

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con i denti gli laceravano. E perchè tutti i sensi si soddisfacessero nella vendetta, avendo prima udite le loro querele, vedute le loro ferite, tocco le lor carni lacere, volevano ancora che il gusto le assaporasse ; accioche comme tutte le parti di fuora ne erano sazie, quelle di dentro se ne saziassero ancora."

Machiavelli, lib. 2. *p.* 110. *tom.* i.

Such are the sad scenes which history at intervals in almost every country holds up to our view. Youth, beauty, innocence, might have some plea to pity and compassion,

"Scirent si ignoscere."

But in the paroxisms of human rage man ceases to be man and becomes a monster.

(*f*) Machiavel has left a frightful picture of him both as to his moral and personal character: "Fu questo Duca, come i governi suoi dimostrarono, avaro e crudele, nelle audienze difficile, nel rispondere superbo. Voleva la servitù non la benivolenza degli uomini, e per questo più di esser temuto che amato desiderava. Nè era da esser meno odiosa la sua presenza, che si fussero i costumi ; perchè era piccolo e nero aveva la barba lunga e rada tanto, che da ogni parte di essere odiato meritiva." *Machiavelli, lib.* 2. *p.* 111. *tom.* i.

erected, whose height prepared them only for greater humiliation, were levelled with the ground. To the nobles this stroke was fatal.—They fell to rise no more. —Their ruin was even so complete, that Florence is said by its historian not only to have lost the use of arms, but to have had every spark of generosity extinguished (*g*).

The public offices were then divided between the patricians, citizens, and common people.

Francesco de' Medici was at the head of the magistracy in 1348; but, from the dreadful plague which then reigned with such horrid fatality, neither Francesco nor his colleagues could exercise their functions. This was the memorable plague emphatically termed the BLACK PLAGUE, the most awful and most celebrated visitation of Omnipotence in the history of the world, which first appearing in China, spread over Asia, desolated Europe, extended its ravages to the Poles, and mowed down a third part of the human race. Such was the distress and devastation at Florence, that Boccacio informs us, "The respectable authority of the laws was at an end "and annihilated, the magistrates being all either dead, "or

(*g*) "Il che fu cagione che Firenze non solamente di armi, ma di ogni generosita si spogliasse." *Machiavelli, lib. 2. p. 117. tom. i.*

"or sick and without assistants to carry their orders "into execution, that every one followed his own incli- "nations, and committed whatever violence he chose "with impunity (*h*)."

Almanno, the second son of Everardo de' Medici, left two sons, Giovanni and Salvestro. The first, whom Dempster terms the "Son of the Count," signalized himself in the Florentine war against the famous Giovanni Visconti, who uniting under the government of Milan the rights of the Monarch with the power of the Priesthood, of boundless ambition, master of all Lombardy, and in possession of great resources, added to great talents, threatened Italy with an invasion at which it trembled. This Giovanni de' Medici was twice Gonfalonier in 1349 and 1353.

Notwithstanding the government since the fall of the nobility in 1343 had been shared by the patricians, the citizens, and commonalty, the patricians or nobles preserved the first degree of credit, and they had the imprudence

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(*h*) "In tanta afflittione e miseria della nostra citta, era la reverenda auttorita delle legge cosi divine come humane quasi caduta e dissoluta tutta, per li ministri e executori di quelle, liquali, si come gli altri uomini erano tutti o morti, o infermi, o si di famigli rimasi stremi, che uficio alcuno non potean fare, per laqual cosa era a ciascuno licito, quanto a grado gliera, d'adoperare."

Boccacio Giornata prima, p. 3. 4to. 1527.

Machiavel states the deaths at Florence to have been more than 96,000. "In Firenze piu che novantascimila anime mancarono."

imprudence to endeavour at strengthening themselves by force and violence. In 1357 they introduced the practice of ADMONISHING, which was an intimation to the persons of their being excluded from any office either for a certain period, or for life; a species of tyranny which continued in force amidst the public anger and execration. Salvestro de' Medici was chosen Gonfalonier in 1378, and from the moment of his election he was determined to rescue the people from the oppression, under which they groaned. His friends lent him their assistance, concerted with him the plan of carrying their wishes into effect, of enforcing the ancient ordinances against the nobles, and of restoring the ADMONISHED to their rights and privileges. The Great Council was assembled, and the propositions were opposed. Salvestro de' Medici then rose, and declared he would retire from his office. "I understood, Citizens," said he, "that I was elected Gonfalonier not for the purpose of "deciding a few insignificant disputes, but to correct "abuses, to repress insolence, and to watch over the "safety of the state. My just intentions are opposed. "I am no longer able to serve you, and I resign my "post." On this apparent secession, his friends threw themselves in his way, retained him by their solicitations, and the clamours of the crowd were very loud and violent. The Council overawed by the tumult, or prevailed on by the remonstrances of the people, waved their objections, and the propositions passed. Though

the point was however carried, the passions of the people were not appeased, and Salvestro de' Medici, hurried by the rapidity of their motions beyond what was originally his aim, had to lament a series of excesses, which it was not in his power to prevent or to restrain as much as he could have wished. The calm to appearance was only returning through his laborious exertions when he went out of office, and the magistracy of his successor was even more tempestuous.—An unbridled populace glutted its resentments, proscribed, exterminated. Yet this populace, though awed in some slight degree by the efforts and superior virtue of Salvestro de' Medici whilst in office, had afterwards the gratitude, when it had no longer any check from him in his judicial capacity, to honour him with the Equestrian rank.—But it compelled the magistrates to abdicate.—Michele Lando, a common wool-comber, of hideous aspect, in rags, with naked legs and almost a naked body, was the standard-bearer, and at the head of the insurgents. Turning to his companions, and shewing them the palace, "You see," said he, "this palace.—You are the masters of it.—Let "me know your wishes."—And he was elected Gonfalonier by the acclamations of the surrounding multitude. Lando with talents and abilities, for which he was more indebted to nature than to fortune, had also the good sense to lend a willing ear to the advice of the Medici family, and he entered on the duties of his station by a vigorous attempt to suppress the fires, the plunder, and car-

An insurrection, and Michele Lando chosen Gonfalonier.

carnage to which the city and its inhabitants had been exposed. When the licentious populace could no longer indulge itself in such criminal proceedings, it soon became dissatisfied, and the discontent ripened into new tumults and another insurrection. Lando's courage and activity did not fail him; he sallied out, supported by a considerable number of his most respectable fellow-citizens, fell sword in hand upon the mutineers, dispersed them, and by his spirit and good conduct the public order and tranquillity were at once restored. The state offices were then filled in common by the higher and lower classes of citizens, though the latter retained the employments of most emolument, consequence, and credit. As Salvestro de' Medici was the most considerable person attached to the new form of government, he was the Arbiter of Anarchy, if the expression may be allowed, or in other words, the governor of the state. In this last revolution the people had completely triumphed, and their joy was proportionably great. Yet the short period of three years was the utmost extent to which it reached!—Confiscations, banishments, proscriptions, punishments of every kind had rendered it completely odious and dreadful, and another revolution followed which again threw the reins of government into the hands of the nobles. On this fresh acquisition of their former power, they forgot that moderation is the first of ARISTOCRATIC VIRTUES, and they signalized themselves

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Michele Lando banished.

themselves by more flagrant, or the same atrocities that had driven their predecessors into exile, or led them to the scaffold. Michele Lando was compelled to quit his country (*a*), who deserved a better fate, but death had kindly released Salvestro de' Medici from the pain of seeing this change in the politics of Florence, that destroyed the fabric he had erected, and in which he probably would have been an early victim (*b*).

From what has been already said of the origin of the House of Medici, it will not be difficult to divine the intention of the author of the "Discours merveilleux sur "la vie, les actions et deportements de la Reyne Cathe-"rine," and to ascertain the truth, the falsity, the exaggeration and absurdity of the following extract. "La "Maison de Medicis ayant eté long espace de tems ca-"cheè a Florence, sous la lie du peuple, en petites ruet-"tes, où par sa vileté personne ne la connoissoit, com-"mença

(*a*) "Ottenuta l' impresa si posarono i tumulti solo per virtù del Gonfaloniere; il quale d' animo, di prudenza, e di bontà supero in quel tempo qualunque cittadino, e merita d' essere annoverato tra i pochi che abbino beneficata la patria loro. —La bontà sua non gli lasciò mai venir nell animo pensiero, che fusse al bene universale contrario." *Machiavelli, lib.* 3. *p.* 151. *tom.* i.

A higher elogium Language cannot bestow, a lesser Lando did not deserve.

(*b*) The tomb of Salvestro de' Medici is to be seen in one of the churches at Florence, and the inscription still subsists. "Silvester Medicis hic requiescit, qui ita de Republica domi forisque meritus est, ut equestri ordine et amplissimis donis, et loco sepulturæ maximo consensu Civitatis decoratus est."

"mença à hausser le front par moyen d' un Charbonni-
"er, qui acquit un peu de bien; celui-ci eut un fils Me-
"dicin, lequel commença à prendre surnom de son
"Art. Et comme nous voyons aujourdhui les gens de
"metier prendre pour marque et enseigne l' un de leurs
"principaux outils, pareillement celui-ci prit pour ses
"armoiries cinque pillules, en nombre non pair, com-
"me les Medicins ont coutume de les ordonner: d'a-
"vantage ce Medicin voulant montrer à la posterité
"que par son art il etait parvenu à quelque nom, prit
"le surnom de Medicis, qui a eté retenu jusques à ce
"jour. Lisez tous les historiens de Florence, vous n'y
"trouverez nulle mention de cette maison, que sur la fin,
"encore qu' en parlant des factions de la ville, et nom-
"mant toutes les familles nobles ou notables entré les
"populaires, qui etoient contraintes de suivre l' une ou
"l' autre, il se presente assez d' occasions d' en parler.
"Boccace n' en fait aucune mention en son denombre-
"ment des familles illustres; et de fait le premier degre
"où monta la Maison de Medicis fut dressé par un cer-
"tain Sylvestre, qui se rendit chef de populace con-
"tre les gentil-hommes (*c*)." In all likelihood the Family name, its arms, and the figure of the "Palle," or golden

(*c*) "Discours merveilleux de la Vie, Actions et Deportements de la Reyne Catherine de Medici," which was attributed to Bernard Serres, but generally supposed the Work of Henry Stephens. It was first published in 1574, with the date 1575, and afterwards inserted in the 3rd volume of "Memoires d' Estat sous Charles IX, in 1577.

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en Balls, in them, supplied the author with some of his ideas, and perhaps he was also desirous of repaying the insult, that Dante, disgraced by Charles of Valois, had offered to the Royal Family of France, where the shade of one of its august ancestors acknowledges a similar debasing origin (*d*).

Salvestro de' Medici left two sons, Veri and Almanno, by Louisa Donati, whose family was a branch of that of Can-

(*d*) "I fui radice della mala pianta
Che la terra Christiana tutta aduggia
Si che buon frutto rado se ne schianta.
Chiamato fui di la Ugo Ciapetta,
. . . .
Di mi son nati i Filippi, e Luigi
Per cui novellamente e Francia rettá.
Figluol fui d' un BECCAJO de Parigi
Quando gli Rege antichi venner meno."

Dante del Purgatorio, Canto 20. 43—53.

Mr. Roscoe observes, "In a *M.S.* of the Riccardi library at Florence, of which I have obtained an ample extract, intitled "*Origine e descendenza della casa de' Medici*," the origin of the family greatness is romantically referred to Averardo de' Medici, a commander under Charlemagne, who, for his valour in destroying the gigantic plunderer *Mugello*, by whom the surrounding country was laid waste, was honoured with the privilege of bearing for his arms six *palle*, or balls, as characteristic of the iron balls that hung from the mace of his fierce antagonist, the impression of which remained on his shield. Verini had before this accounted for the family name and arms by another hereditary tale.

Est qui Bebryaca Medices testetur ab urbe
Venisse; et Toscam sobolem delesse superbam
Asserat: hinc Medicis meruit cognomen habere
Quod Medicus Tusci fuerit, sic ore venenum
Dixerunt patrio: factique insignia portet
Senis in globulis flaventem sanguine peltam."

Ver. de illust. Urbis, lib. iii.

Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, vol. 1. *p.* 7.

Cancelleri, established at Pistoia, and one of the most illustrious in Tuscany. The Donati also were of the antient Florentine nobility, and nobles " di Signoria et " di Torre." A female of this House, about the year 1225, was innocently the cause of the greatest misfortune to her country. Giovanni Buondelmonte, who had made proposals of marriage to one of the Amidei, was on the point of performing his engagement, when an artful widow of the Donati Family, who had a very beautiful daughter, seduced him into a breach of his intended contract. Presenting her daughter to him, and lifting up the corner of her veil, " See," said she, " what beauty, " and what you have lost." " Nothing under Heaven," replied Buondelmonte, " can be more beautiful, and I " have lost nothing."—He had decided instantaneously on the part he meant to take, and married her. The insult to the Amidei Family and their friends could not be forgiven; it was of too deep a dye to be washed away, except by the blood of the aggressor, and his death barely satisfied their vengeance. Florence entered with eagerness into the animosity between the families, and a civil war, disguised under the odious mask of the Guelph and Ghibeline factions, with all its train of horrors, from which Florence had been hitherto exempt, was the consequence of this private injury (*e*).

Tragical fate of Giovanni Buondelmonte.

Louisa

(*e*) Machiavel, with some slight variations, has given the anecdote at length. " Era nella famiglia dei Donati una donna vedova e ricca, la quale aveva una fig-

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Louisa Donati, the wife of Salvestro de' Medici, was the daughter of Americ, and grand-daughter of the celebrated Corso Donati, one of the most distinguished persons of his time, and chief of the Neri party, who lost his life in a popular commotion, with the character of having

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liuola di bellissimo aspetto. Aveva costei infra se disegnato a Messer Buondelmonte cavaliere giovine, e della famiglia de' Buondelmonti capo maritarla. Questo suo disegno o per negligenza, o per credere potere essere sempre a tempo, non aveva ancora scoperto a persona quando il caso fece che a Messer Buondelmonte si marito una fanciulla degli Amidei: di che quella donna fu malissimo contenta, e sperando di potere con la bellezza della sua figliuola prima che quelle nozze si celebrassero perturbarle, vedendo Messer Buondelmonte che solo veniva verso la sua casa, scese da basso, e dietro si condusse la figliuola, e nel passare quello se gli fece incontra dicendo: Io mi rallegro veramente assai dell' aver voi preso moglie, ancora che io vi avessi serbata questa mia figliuola, e spinta la porta gliene fece vedere. Il cavaliere veduto la bellezza della fanciulla, la quale era rara, e considerato il sangue e la dote non essere inferiore a quella di colei che egli aveva tolta, si accese in tanto ardore di averla, che non pensando alla fede data, nè alla ingiuria, che faceva a romperla, nè ai mali che dalla rotta fede gliene potevano incontrare, disse: Poichè voi me l' avete serbata, io sarei ingrato, sendo ancora a tempo, a rifiutarla; e senza metter tempo in mezzo celebrò le nozze. Questa cosa come fu intesa riempiè di sdegno la famiglia degli Amidei, e quella degli Uberti, i quali erano loro per parentado congiunti; e convenuti insieme con molti altri loro parenti conclusero, che questa ingiuria non si poteva senza vergogna tollerare, nè con altra vendetta che con la morte di Messer Buondelmonte vendicare. E benchè alcuni discorressero i mali che da quella potessero seguire, il Mosca Lamberti disse, che chi pensava assai cose non ne concludeva mai alcuna, dicendo quella trita e nota sentenza: Cosa fatta capo ha. Dettono pertanto il carico di questo omicidio al Mosca, a Stiatta Uberti, a Lambertuccio Amidei, e a Oderigo Fifanti. Costoro la mattina della Pasqua di Resurrezione si rinchiusero nelle case degli Amidei poste tra il ponte vecchio e Santo Stefano, e passando Messer Buondelmonte il fiume sopra un caval bianco, pensando che fusse così facil cosa sdimenticare un ingiuria, come rinunziare a un parentado, fu da loro a pie del ponte sotto una statua di Marte assaltato e morto."

Machiavelli, lib. 2. *p.* 57, 58. *tom.* i.

Dante has pathetically bewailed the consequences:

having entertained views incompatible with the duty of a private citizen (*a*).

Tomaso D' Albizzi takes the lead in the Republic.

Tomaso D' Albizzi had taken the lead, since the revolution of 1381 had restored their power to the nobles, and the course of violence and injustice met little interruption. Yet the submission of the people had its bounds, and indignant at their sufferings, they hurried to the house of Veri de' Medici, and conjured him by every thing dear to him, and by the memory of his father Salvestro de' Medici, to deliver them from their tyrants. If Veri had been of an ambitious cast of character, the opportunity would have been a favourable one, and he might have possessed himself of the government: but he contented himself with exhorting them to patience, and promising them his influence and intercession. He was at last prevailed upon to attend them to the palace, and on his sudden appearance surrounded by the mutineers, the magistrates were in the utmost agitation till he assured them, the people had mistaken his sentiments, and that

Insurrection, and generous conduct of Veri de' Medici.

"O Buondelmonte, quanto mal fuggisti
Le nozze sue, per gli altri consotti!
Molti sarebber' lieti, che son tristi,
Se Dio t' avesse conceduto ad Ema
La prima volta, ch' a città venisti."

Dante, del Paradiso, Cant. 16. 140—144.

(*a*) Machiavel has passed the following apparently impartial judgment on him. "Se egli avesse avuto l' animo più quieto, sarebbe più felice la memoria sua. Nondimeno merita di esser numerato tra i rari cittadini che abbia avuto la nostra città."

Machiavelli, lib. 2. *p.* 84. *tom.* i.

that he had not any of those criminal intentions, of which they supposed him to be guilty.—"What proof," said he, "have I ever given you of an ambitious or a "turbulent spirit? Do not suspect I have either instigat-"ed or been concerned in the present tumult. I throw "myself upon your candour, but let me recommend you "to be satisfied with a compromise. If you push things "to extremities and aspire to a complete triumph, you en-"danger the state." Veri was assured his advice should be followed, was applauded and entreated to use his interest in pacifying the people, and on his report to them of the conference, with a solemn pledge of the redress of their grievances, they dispersed. The magistrates, however, recovered from the pressure of the moment, were not solicitous to fulfil the stipulations that had been, in their opinion, extorted from them, and Veri de' Medici, sensible that he had erred on the side of moderation, which is not a common case, sunk down into the grave, his last hours embittered with his own reproaches, and the painful reflection that he had contributed to the deception of his fellow-citizens.

Almanno, the brother of Veri de' Medici, but without his moderation was banished in 1395, and along with him his sons Andrea and Bernardo.

In 1395, Antonio the son of Bartolomeo experienced the same disgrace.—History has represented Antonio the son of Giovanni and nephew of Salvestro de' Medici,

dici, as a bold, resolute, and daring character; and if Veri had listened to his suggestions in the commotion which has been mentioned, its termination would probably have been very different. They had been at variance, and on their reconciliation it was Antonio's advice to seize upon the state. Veri replied to him, by telling him, "that whilst he was his enemy, he had never feared him, and as his friend he should only follow any honest advice, that he might give him (*b*)." As the commotion ended, Antonio could not escape a sentence of exile, and he retired to Bologna, with a determination to nurse in secret his resentment, till he could gratify it. At the end of two years he had worked up a conspiracy against Tomaso D' Albizzi, and contrived with his associates to steal into Florence, but they missed their stroke, and took refuge in the church of St. Reparata. Their supposed asylum was soon forced, some of the conspirators were taken, others slain in defending themselves, and Antonio de' Medici was torn from the altar, to which he had fled for safety, and carried to immediate execution.

Conspiracy against Tomaso D' Albizzi, and Antonio de' Medici executed.

It

(*b*) Antonio de' Medici, il quali aveva tenuto seco piu tempo particolare inimicizia, lo persuadeva a pigliare il dominio della Repubblica. Al quale Messer Veri disse. Le tue minacce quando tu mi eri nemico non mi fecero mai paura, ne ora che tu mi sei amico mi faranno male i tuoi consigli."

Machiavelli, lib. 3. p. 164. tom. 1.

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It has been observed that Everardo, the grandson of Filippo de' Medici, left two sons, Bicci and Giovanni. Bicci's illustrious posterity have been distinguished whilst their progenitor is otherwise unknown. In the public monuments he has notwithstanding the title of "Dominus," and he left five sons, Giovanni, Matteo, Michele, Paolo, and Francesco.

The year 1400 produced a new conspiracy against the ruling party. Two of the Medici were exiled, and the rest of the family ADMONISHED for ten years. Machiavel (*c*), from whom this information is derived, supposes them to have been the sons of Bicci and Giovanni, Almanno the son of Salvestro and Antonio the son of Bartolomeo having been previously banished in 1395, and that the sons of Veri were not included in the proscription.—Fortune here discovers her caprices.—Ready to pour on the Medici her most extensive favours, she plunged them into transitory difficulties and a previous debasement.—Giovanni the eldest son of Bicci, a wise and virtuous citizen, laid the foundation of the greatness of the family, and if to a common observer the recollection of him is lost in the superior blaze of his descendants,

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(*c*) "Costoro fecero ribelli sei della famiglia de' Ricci, sei di quella degli Alberti, DUE DE' MEDICI, tre degli Scali, due degli Strozzi, Bindo Altoviti, Bernardo Adimari, con molti ignobili. Ammonirono ancora tutta la famiglia degli Alberti, Ricci, e Medici per dieci anni, eccetto pochi di loro."

Machiavelli, lib. 3. *p.* 169—170. *tom.* i.

a more discerning eye will do him justice and appreciate his merit. He returned to Florence at the expiration of the term for which he had been banished, and became equally respectable for his prudence and his opulence. A new idol of the people was a dangerous object to the ruling party. Usano was at its head, and notwithstanding his remonstrances and endeavours (*d*), Giovanni de' Medici, who was a candidate for the office of Gonfalonier in 1422, was elected. The reputation of the new chief magistrate instead of expiring with his office, acquired a fresh degree of celebrity, and he had the integrity to be satisfied with his power, which he neither wished to extend nor to abuse.

Giovanni de' Medici elected Gonfalonier.

Filippo Maria, the last Duke of Milan of the name of Visconti, had given offence to his neighbours by his restless and ambitious temper, and the government of Florence aware of his hostile intentions, wished to gain the advantage of the first attack. Giovanni did not approve of their precipitation, and in fact the war opened very unfortunately for the Florentines. The Duke's forces beat their army at Sagonara, 1422, but, extraordinary as it may seem, not an individual lost his life in the

(*d*) "E Niccolò da Uzano non mancò di avvertirne gli altri cittadini, mostrando quanto era pericoloso nutrir uno, che avesse nell' universale tanta riputazione; e come era facile opporsi ai disordini nei principi, ma lasciandogli crescere era difficile il rimediarvi; e che conosceva come in Giovanni erano molte parti, che superavano quelle di Messer Salvestro." *Machiavelli, lib.* 4. *p.* 175. *tom.* i.

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the engagement. A single trooper having fallen under some of the cavalry was carried off the field severely bruised and recovered in a few days. The chronicles of the times are full of instances of a hundred such encounters, and the Italian battles of that age may be justly styled the Triumphs of Humanity. Œconomists of human blood, these cautious warriors aspired only to the honour of making prisoners that they might ransom. Their lances were never shivered against each other, and they returned from the field with their virgin swords unstained in their hands, the only blood that was spilt being what fell from their horses sides. If a horse broke loose, took fright, or became unruly, it was sufficient to decide the fortune of the day. The whole squadron followed on a gallop, and

> "Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum (*e*)."

The enemy pursued as fast as they were able, laughing at the confusion of their adversaries, and crying out, "Good terms and quarter." In these early wars indeed the names of the generals were alone tremendous, and we read of Iron-Arm, Ham-Stringer, and a variety of such ludicrous (*f*) appellations. A Venetian general from his delicious stratagems had the name of "Gatta-"melata,"

(*e*) *P. Virgilii Æneid.* 8. 596.

(*f*) Braccio di Ferro, Fracassa, Sforza, Fiera-Mosca, Taglia-Cozza.—Our history has its Iron-Sides, and Richard Cœur de Lion.

"melata," and Piccinino not less celebrated, seeing a battle lost, and fearing to be taken prisoner, was concealed in a sack, which probably furnished the idea of one of the cheats of Scapin (*g*). The French and Spaniards, and in their turn the Swiss, appeared afterwards on the Italian plains, and they changed the whole military system. These comic farces were converted into real tragedies, and instead of tilts and tournaments, we have obstinate and bloody conflicts. "Look at these "savages," said one of Scipio's descendants, "and see "how they run into the jaws of certain death, as if they "were to be restored to life in the morning."

The Milanese war was therefore carried on without much personal danger, and was only ruinous in expence. New taxes and additional impositions were resorted to for its support, and the nobility had the address to set them at defiance, or secure themselves an exemption. On the lower class of citizens they principally fell, and as they staggered under the weight, they turned their eyes towards Giovanni de' Medici. Usano was perfectly aware of his consequence, and he courted him, tried every stratagem, and left nothing undone to seduce him or bind him to his interest, though all in vain. Giovanni was completely on his guard, and proof against

(*g*) "Lo Sforza ruppe l' esercito del Duca di Milano, il Piccinino si salvò portato in un sacco da un servitore a guisa d' arnesi." *Meccatti, p.* 410.

against every artifice, and as his refusal to embrace Usano's offers could not be concealed, it added to his popularity and character. Far however from a wish of fomenting the dissatisfaction of the people, he only determined to protect them. By the introduction of a new method of levying the taxes, a more equal distribution of them was established, and the patricians were under the necessity of contributing their proportion. The people still urged with some heat a retrospective edict, but Giovanni de' Medici pointed out to them the impropriety of their demand, and he had the singular felicity of convincing them of their error and injustice.—Such is the spectacle that he exhibits for many years, during which he was the constant mediator between the two discordant parties. He lived to see with pleasure a peace concluded between the Duke of Milan and the League, for Venice had joined Florence in the war, and dying soon afterwards left by his wife Picarda Bueri (*h*), of

Giovanni de' Medici mediates between the contending parties.

Death of Giovanni de' Medici.

(*h*) Donatello the sculptor erected a monument to the memory of Giovanni de' Medici, and Picarda, in the church of S. Lorenzo at Florence, with the following inscription:

"Si merita in patriam, si gloria, sanguis et omni
Larga manus, nigra libera morte forent,
Viveret heu! patriæ casta cum conjuge felix,
Auxilium miseris, portus et aura suis,
Omnia sed quando superantur morte, *Johannes*
Hoc mausoleo, tuque *Picarda*, jaces:
Ergo senex mœret, juvenis, puer, omnis et ætas
Orba parente suo patria mœsta gemit."

of a family little known, two sons Cosmo and Lorenzo, to whom with his last breath he strongly recommended his own moderation (*a*).—Counsel, which they neither wholly followed, nor rejected.

CHAP. I.

Of the first part of Cosmo de' Medici's life little is now known.

(*a*) "In questo tempo Giovanni de' Medici ammalò, e conoscendo il mal suo mortale chiamò Cosimo e Lorenzo suoi figliuoli, e disse loro: Io creder esser vivuto quel tempo, che da Dio e dalla natura mi fu al mio nascimento consegnato. Muojo contento poichè io vi lascio ricchi, sani, e di qualità, che voi potrete, quando voi seguitiate le mie pedate vivere in Firenze onorati, e con la grazia di ciascuno. Perchè niuna cosa mi fa tanto morir contento, quanto mi ricordare di non aver mai offeso alcuno, anzi piuttosto, secondo ch' io ho potuto, beneficato ognuno. Così conforto a far voi. Dello stato, se voi volete vivere sicuri, toglietene quanto ve ne è dalle leggi e dagli uomini dato, il che non vi recherà mai nè invidia nè pericolo, perchè quello che l' uomo si toglie, non quello che all' uomo è dato ci fà odiare; e sempre ne avrete molto più di coloro, che volendo la parte d' altri perdono la loro, e avanti che la perdino vivono in continui affanni. Con queste arti io ho tra tanti nimici, tra tanti dispareri non solamente mantenuta, ma accresciuta la riputazione mia in questa città. Così quando seguitiate le pedate mie, manterrete ed accrescerete voi; ma quando facesti altrimenti, pensate che il fine vostro non ha a essere altrimenti felice, che sia stato quello di coloro che nella memoria nostra hanno rovinato se, e distrutta la casa loro. Morì poco dipoi, e nell' universale della città lasciò di se un grandissimo desiderio, secondochè meritavano le sue ottime qualità. Fu Giovanni misericordioso, e non solamente dava elemosine a chi le domandava, ma molte volte al bisogno de' poveri senza essere domandato soccorreva. Amava ognuno, i buoni lodava, e de' cattivi aveva compassione. Non domandò mai onori, ed ebbegli tutti. Non andò mai in palagio se non chiamato. Amava la pace, e fuggiva la guerra. Alle avversità degli uomini sovveniva, le prosperità ajutava. Era alieno dalle rapine pubbliche, e del bene comune aumentatore. Ne' magistrati grazioso, non di molta eloquenza, ma di prudenza grandissima. Mostrava nella presenza melanconico, ma era poi nella conversazione piacevole e faceto. Morì ricchissimo di tesoro, ma più di buona fama e di benivolenza."

Machiavelli, lib. 4. *p.* 191, 192. *tom.* i.

Such great and shining characters are quitted with regret! They form the delight of their friends, and are the blessings of the times in which they live!

CHAP. I.

Cosmo de' Medici succeeds Giovanni de' Medici, and acquires great popularity.

known. Born in 1389, he was near his fortieth year when Giovanni died.—Scarce had the venerable old man closed his eyes, when the heir of his popular favour began to cultivate it with double and uncommon care, though with less disinterested views.—The genius of Salvestro de' Medici seemed to have descended to him. more supple, more accommodating, and more extensive. Great affability, the most insinuating politeness, vast benevolence, and unbounded liberality soon attached to him a numerous body of friends, in whom he found a very powerful party (*b*). One class of citizens believed him ranged on their side, others flattered themselves with being his superiors, when to the astonishment of all, he appeared, as it were by enchantment, at the summit of every thing. A violent effervescence of the nobles, who were still under the direction of Usano, was impetuously rising, though whilst he lived, this sage politician had the influence to prevent their coming to extremities, and a rupture with the Medici. Usano was now no more, and Rinaldo D'Albizzi stepped into his station. Two fair and justifiable methods of acquiring a political preponderance, and curbing the House of Medici, naturally

Rinaldo D'Albizzi at the head of the nobles.

(*b*) "Era Cosimo uomo prudentissimo, di grave e grata presenza, tutto liberale, tutto umano, nè mai tentò alcuna cosa contra la parte nè contra lo stato, ma attendeva a beneficar ciascuno, e con la liberalità sua farsi partigiani assai cittadini. Di modochè l' esempio suo accresceva carico a quelli che governavano, e lui giudicava per questa via o vivere in Firenze potente e sicuro quanto alcun altro, o venendosi per l' ambizione degli avversari allo straordinario, essere e con l' armi e con i favori superiore." *Machiavelli, lib. 4. p. 206. tom. i.*

rally presented themselves to this new chief of the patricians.—To have attacked Cosmo de' Medici with his own weapons, and employed the means he had used to captivate the people, would probably have been the most successful and secure.—To have attempted to recover the ancient nobility was the other.—The first does not appear to have been an object of his contemplation, the second was more congenial with his temper and turn of mind, but he found it impossible to adopt it from the jealousies and opposition of his own party. Force therefore was only left him, and he ventured on the dangerous experiment. Rinaldo D' Albizzi under a persuasion that no defence could be long useful, which did not at the same time include a preparation for offensive measures, vowed the fall of his rival, and engaged the Gonfalonier Guadagna to second his views, who summoned Cosmo de' Medici before the magistracy.—He obeyed the order, attended at the hour appointed, and was arrested as soon as he had entered the palace. The haughty D' Albizzi, surrounded with his satellites, soon afterwards took his seat in the convention he had assembled. Cosmo was during this time confined in a tower within the palace, where he distinctly heard the cries and clamours of the people, and listened to the tumult. What he had first to fear was being sacrificed under the charge of some pretended violation of the laws, and he expected every instant a judicial assassin with his dagger; he next apprehended being taken off by poison, and he

Cosmo de' Medici summoned before the magistracy.

CHAP. I.

braved from this suspicion the extremes both of hunger and thirst. Yet his strength of mind did not desert him in this trying situation, and every precious moment, that he could turn to advantage, he made use of to corrupt his guards. Even the stern and rigid features of the Gonfalonier gradually softened, and he became more tractable at the sight of gold, and the offer of a considerable reward. Cosmo at length escaped, being simply banished with his partisans to Padua, and on his being brought before the magistracy to receive his sentence, the 4th of October, 1432, he met it with more composure and resignation, as notwithstanding the Gonfalonier's promise, in whose fickle and perfidious character there could be no confidence, he expected that of death to have been pronounced against him (*c*).—His friends conducted him to the frontiers, wherever he passed new honours awaited him, the Marquis of Ferrara shewed him the most distinguished attention, and the Venetians treated him at Padua more like a prince than an exile.

Cosmo de' Medici banished with his friends to Padua.

It is easily discernible that the jealousy of the nobles occasioned Cosmo's exile, but their pretext for it, is not so apparent. Injustice is always on the watch for some specious pretence to mask its malignant purposes, and perhaps

(*c*) "Quando si portò a Cosmo il partito del suo confino, quasi per paura venne meno, dubitando non si portasse la sentenza della vita."

Estratto de Libri de Casi appresso Lami.

perhaps they only, who are blest with an uncommon greatness of soul, and are conscious of the rectitude of their conduct, have the courage to leave a defence of their actions to themselves. Of little value indeed is the fictitious garb, which is soon either torn away or drops off, and the only durable mode of appearing just and honest, and impressing that persuasion on the world, is to be really so.—Of what offence, it may be asked, had Cosmo de' Medici been guilty, of what crime had he been accused by D' Albizzi before the convention, and on what fact was his exile founded? History is altogether silent.—If recourse is to be had to the foul vehicles of slander, and information may be collected from private calumnies, the questions might be answered, by misconduct, improper views, and peculation.

"Famoso illustris damnatus crimine Furti (*d*)."

Ostracism and another summary method of proceeding were the state engines at Athens and Syracuse, by which the citizens either suspected of ambitious designs, or obnoxious on account of their merit and their power, were driven into banishment; but the problem is not to be resolved in this manner. Laws of this kind had no existence in the Florentine Annals, and the Tuscan code furnishes no traces of such absurdities, which endeavoured

(*d*) *Satyræ Philelphi.*

CHAP. I. voured to sanctify injustice, and fatally oppressed both innocence and virtue.

Florence, during the exile of her illustrious citizen, was in a state of widowhood, every individual in astonishment, and even D'Albizzi, the victorious D' Albizzi, a prey to inquietude and agitation.—A melancholy prospect rose in imagination before his eyes, he foresaw the reverse of fortune, that might one day be his lot, he was anxious to secure himself against it, but instead of acting with the vigour, which his situation enabled him to do, he was distracted with doubts and unmanned by apprehensions.—Within the compass of a single year a magistrate was elected, who was devoted to his enemy. The desperate attempt to annul the election was the forlorn remedy he had to try, and he had the mortification to find his friends waver or give way, and to discover in them neither the union, nor attachment to each other, which were so necessary for their mutual safety. Fortune, as frequently happens in the common intercourse of life, had presented a favourable and decisive moment, and neglected, it was passed to return no more (*e*) !—

They

(*e*) Shakespeare has given the sentiment in a sublime metaphor:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

Julius Cæsar, Act 4. S. 3.

Which Beaumont and Fletcher have imitated in the Custom of the country:

"There is an hour in each man's life appointed,
To make his happiness, if then he seize it."

They deliberated, when the mortal blow had been already given (*f*).—Eugenius the IVth (*g*), who had taken shelter in Florence from the tempest then raging in the See of Rome, in vain offered his mediation, for the magistrates had admitted troops into the city, and Cosmo was recalled by public acclamation.—Amnesty, oblivion, indemnity, and pardon were no longer to be expected; retaliation was only thought of, and the sinking party experienced

(*f*) Precipitation has been sometimes supposed to be the enemy of prudence, yet there are instances where every thing must rest upon the hazard of the die, and to deliberate is to be lost. The Cardinal Ossat, one of the ablest men of his time, wrote in the following manner to his master. "Dieu me fait cette grace, Sire, que je ne tarde gueres a me resoudre: ce que sa Providence me presente de la main gauche, je le prends de droit." The baldness of opportunity is proverbial.

(*g*) The name of this Pontiff before his exaltation to the Popedom was Gabriel Condelmerio. The Duke of Milan's troops, advancing after their conquest of Ancona, made such ravages in the neighbourhood, that the inhabitants were in the utmost consternation, and Eugenius himself uncertain whither he should retire. The people resorted to him in crowds to complain of the general pillage and the loss of all their grain and cattle, and his nephew the Cardinal Condelmerio having rudely told them in the words of Platina, "Eos nimiam spem in pecoribus collocasse. Venetos quidem sine gregibus et jumentis longe urbaniorem vitam ducere," they were so much enraged as to cry out immediately, "to Arms, Liberty, Liberty!" They deposed the magistrates, and the Pope escaped in the habit of a monk to the Tiber, and embarked in a small boat for Ostia, where he arrived in safety, though he had been often attacked from the banks of the river by showers of stones and arrows. He reached Florence afterwards, and lived to return in triumph to his capital, and see his rebellious children reconciled to the See of Rome.—Like another Wolsey, before he expired he is said to have expressed a conviction of the vanity of all earthly enjoyments and temporal grandeur. "Cum esset morti proximus——eumque a religiosis viris cinctus esset, interpunctâ suspiriis voce, versoque ad eos vultu dixisse fertur, 'O Gabriel, quanto magis conduxisset animæ tuæ saluti, ut nunquam Cardinalatum nec Pontificatum obtinuisses, sed in tuo monasterio religiosam disciplinam coluisses!'" *Launoii Epist. ult. Pars 1. p. 82. Ed. Cantab.*

CHAP. I.

Cosmo de' Medici returns in triumph.

experienced the utmost rigour and severest persecution (*h*). Italy from end to end was filled with fugitives or exiles, and Cosmo hastened back to Florence. We do not perhaps read of a single instance where a fortunate general, on a return to his native country after a successful war, was received by greater or more grateful and applauding multitudes.—They conferred on him the glorious titles of "the Benefactor of the People," and "the Father of his Country (*i*)."

Popular applause, and the shouts of an admiring crowd, are often of little consequence, except as adding to their satisfaction, whose happiness consists in flattery. —Here they produced lasting fruits.—The attachment of the Florentines to Cosmo de' Medici was sincere and permanent,

(*h*) "Cosmo in urbem revocato, jura divina omnia humanaque confunduntur. Optimates omnes alii relegantur; alii proscribuntur. Hinc direptiones, latrocinia, cædes." *Epist. Philelph.*

We are however to consider through what strainers this intelligence hath passed. Philelphus was avowedly hostile to the House of Medici, and more than a tinge of enmity may predominate. Yet Machiavel confirms in a great measure this account. "Ed a' cittadini non tanto l' umore delle parti noceva, ma le ricchezze, i parenti, e le amicizie private. E se questa proscrizione dal sangue fusse stata accompagnata, avrebbe a quella d'Ottaviano o Silla renduto similitudine."

Machiavelli, lib. 5. p. 228, 229. tom. 1.

(*i*) "Cosimo dall' altra parte avendo notizia della sua restituzione tornò in Firenze; e rade volte occorse, che un cittadino tornando trionfante da una vittoria fusse ricevuto dalla sua patria con tanto concorso di popolo, e con tanta dimostrazione di benevolenza, con quanta fu ricevuto egli tornando dallo esilio, e da ciascuno volontariamente fu salutato Benefattore del popolo, e Padre della patria."

Machiavelli, lib. 4. p. 221. tom. 1.

permanent, though their gratitude might be rather quickened by the hopes of new favours. Even those, who entertained no personal friendship for him, and were not particularly devoted to his interests, had nevertheless felt the effects of his absence, and having once tasted of his general bounty, they were unwilling to renounce or be deprived of it. Disgrace therefore served but to establish his power. His happiness might have been more precarious, if it had not been checquered by temporary misfortunes, and he was probably indebted to a few transitory clouds for years of future prosperity and sunshine. The injustice, that had oppressed him struck deep and lasting root, and was indelibly fastened on the public mind. It became his study to profit by the general sensation, and he employed whatever means seemed likely to retain or increase his superiority, without being scrupulous or nice in the choice of them. A look or a gesture was severely punished, and for a few words death was often the only atonement that could be made. The exiles who infringed their sentences were led to certain execution, many of them were delivered up by the Venetians, and Italy saw with mingled surprise and contempt their powerful republic bartering its honour from interested views. (*a*) The in-

Severity of the government.

(*a*) Per accendere più le parti in Firenze, o fare mediante il sangue la divisione della città nostra più pericolosa; perchè i Veneziani non vedevano altra opposizione alla loro grandezza, che l' unione di quella."

Machiavelli, lib. 5. p. 229. tom. i.

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intentions of the Venetians, a Florentine historian has observed, were to inflame their divisions from a conviction of their union being the first obstacle to Venetian greatness.

The learned Lami, in his collection of the "Deliciæ "Eruditorum," has printed a supposed manuscript of Cosmo de' Medici with the title of "Copia di Parlamen-"to dell' anno 1433—1434," which contains a diffusive recital of his disgrace and his recall. Gold seems by it to have had less influence in his prison, than the safety of two (*b*) of his friends, from whom his enemies were apprehensive of future vengeance. "If we had been all "in their possession," says Cosmo, "we must have had "a bad affair of it." Nicolao de Tolentino, a general in the service of the republic, appeared in arms before the city in order to have delivered his friend by force; but the author of the manuscript adds, "They prevailed on "him to retire, lest my enemies should proceed to per-"sonal violence against me. The advice came from my "relations and my friends, and undoubtedly they acted "honestly, and for the best, though the measure was ill-"judged. As the affair however at last turned out, the "conclusion was more honourable, than might have been "expected (*c*)."

Florence

(*b*) Lorenzo and Everardo.

(*c*) "Se ci avessero preso tutti a tre, ci facessero male arrivare." *Copia di Parlamento dell' anno* 1433—1434. *Lamii Deliciæ Eruditorum, v.* 12. 169. *Florent.* 1742.

"Fù confortato il Capitano, e così Lorenzo a non fare novità, che poteva esser cagione di

Florence must lose on any comparison with ancient Rome, though when the actors on the two stages, notwithstanding the disparity respecting their magnificence, are governed by the same spirit, the allusion may be justified. In the same manner, Cicero, the Father also of his Country, during his long and tedious exile, frequently lamented he had not opposed force with force, and armed in a critical and decisive moment the zeal of Milo against the rage of Clodius. Under similar dissatisfaction during his residence at Thessalonica he accuses the timid or perfidious conduct of Hortensius and Pompey, and after his triumphant restoration he was perpetually repeating his disapprobation of the feeble measures that had been adopted.

Cosmo purchased his escape at a very moderate expence, and he observes with some humour, "My good "friends were ill advised, for if they wanted money I "should willingly have given them five times the sum to "have extricated myself from their hands (*d*)"

Near

farmi fare novità nella persona, e così feciono: e benchè chi consigliò questo fussino parenti, e amici, e a buon fine, non fu buono consiglio.——Ma tutto si vuol dire fussi per lo meglio, perchè ne seguì maggior bene, e con più mio onore."
Lamii Dell. Erud. v. 12. 169.

(*d*) "In fine vedendo non riusciva loro il pensiero de farci fallire; Bernardo Guadagni, offertogli da due persone denari, cioè dal Capitano della Guerra fiorini 500,

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Near the conclusion he declares, "I was elected Gonfalonier for the first months of 1435, and during my "whole administration no citizen was banished and not "one person suffered (*e*)." There may be perhaps a little affectation in the paragraph, and there is a possibility that two months might be exempt from violence, yet it is scarcely to be believed that the persecution of the patricians (for however it may be disguised it deserves the name) was contrary to the wishes of the chief of the reigning party, as seems to be insinuated. It is indeed a well known fact, that the pretended pleasure of revenge had few, if any, charms for Cosmo, and that his natural character was strongly marked by the softer emotions of gentleness and pity. With this allowance it must still be admitted, there were occasions, in which he felt the necessity of doing violence to his inclinations. In more decided language, necessity (*f*) is merely a spe-

cies

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e dallo spedalingo di S. Maria Nuova fiorini 500, i quali ebbe contanti, e Mariotto Balduinetti per mezzo di Baccio d' Antonio di Baccio fiorini 800, a dì 3 d' Ottobre la notte mi trassero di Palazzo e menommi fuori della porta a S. Gallo: Ebbono poco animo, che se avessero voluto denari, l' averebbono avuti diecimila o più, per uscir di pericolo." *Lamii Del. Erud. vol.* 12. 169, &c.

(*e*) "Del mese di Gennaio prossimo fui il primo tratto delle borse dello squittino per Gonfaloniere di giustizia, e al mio tempo non si confinò, ne si fece male a persona." *Lamii Del. Erud, vol.* 12. 169. *&c.*

(*f*) "The Reader will recollect Milton's fine Idea of the Arch Fiend, who

"—————with necessity
The tyrant's plea excus'd his devilish deeds."

Paradise Lost, Book 4. *l.* 393, 394.

cies of state policy, to conceal or palliate the most unwarrantable proceedings, and Cosmo de' Medici only erred on the side of cruelty when imperious interest led him to it.

D' Albizzi at last flattered himself with a speedy opportunity of regaining the situation he had lost. Genoa, shaking off the yoke of Giovanni Visconti Duke of Milan, had been supported by some Florentine reinforcements, and D' Albizzi pressed him to a rupture with the Medici. His solicitations were not useless, though the event was not crowned with the expected success, from the misconduct of his friends or allies, who did not sufficiently attend to, or but feebly endeavoured to carry into execution the advice they received from one of their warmest partisans. "I have to communicate to you," he writes to D' Albizzi, "the most agreeable news you "can possibly receive in your present unfortunate cir"cumstances. Philip Maria, the most excellent Duke "of Milan, has determined to send a very brilliant army "to your relief, under the command of the great and in"vincible Nicolas de Perouse or Piccinino. You will do "me but justice in believing I have principally contribu"ted towards prevailing on the Duke to take this gene"rous step, and under the persuasion that you will con"duct yourself in this conjuncture with all imaginable "prudence, I shall state to you my sentiments. As the "head is the seat of life and the principal part of the

"body,

" body, you ought to begin with it. A blow well placed " upon it (you will easily comprehend my meaning) " will produce the desired effect, and the other members " will drop off. Cut the root, and the whole tree tum- " bles to the ground. I fear, however, there are persons, " who prefer private to public interest, and may be desi- " rous of first attacking some inferior towns. I differ " with them totally. Florence once recovered, the " whole business is finished. When the main object is " secured, you may act to the right or left, in any man- " ner that you please. Beginning at the wrong end, a " thousand accidents may happen to embarrass you, and " you may never be able to proceed. March therefore " directly to Florence; your friends, who are able to as- " sist you will recover their courage, and your perfidious " enemy will lose both his confidence and understanding. " Succours you will not want. Bologna, Lucca, Sien- " na, and Perouse are devoted to you. The Medici are " there detested. Consider the moment is decisive both " for yourself and for the public. Every thing smiles " upon you, and if ye are not wanting to yourselves there " is an end of the parricides and traitors. Let one heart " and one mind unite and animate the whole. Think " only of Medici, the great and common enemy. May " you triumph, and having taken off his head, may you " be free (*g*)."

The

(*g*) " Quo nihil tibi ac cæteris Optimatibus Florentinis neque optatius poterat neque melius contingere, Rainalde Albici, mittit hic humanissimus princeps Philip-

The author of this advice, dictated by a strong share of sense and animosity, writes at the same time to* Cosmo with a pretended freedom. "You know my senti-"ments respecting yourself better than any other person, "and if I have been obliged to speak of you with acrimo-"ny, I can now assure you, that acrimony no longer "subsists. Notwithstanding your unworthy treatment "of

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pus Maria vobis auxilio in Hetruriam, ad recuperandam patriam, inclytum et invictum imperatorem Nicolaum Perusinum, cognomento Piccininum, cum exercitu firmissimo ac rebus omnibus ornatissimo. Id autem meâ potissimum operâ atque diligentiâ effectum esse te non latet.——Quamquam sciam te prudenter omnia curaturum, quid tamen ipse sentiam, sine me exponere paucis. Quoniam præcipuus corporis vigor positus est in capite——ab ipso primum capite initium est sumendum. Hoc enim percusso, penitus membrorum quæ reliqua sunt, nullus est futurus labor. Nam excisâ radice continuò corruit tota arbor. Suspicor enim aliquos fore, qui privatæ rei potius quam publicæ rationem habentes, velint alii ab alio vel oppido vel municipio rem aggredi, ab quibus ego vehementer dissentio. Recuperatâ enim Florentiâ, omnia quæ reipublicæ Florentinæ parent, sine ullâ vi, sine ullo omnino labore quam primum redibunt ad sanitatem.——Quod si secus initium fiat, permulta interea temporis possunt accidere, quæ rem vestram omnem consiliaque perturbent. Itaque omnium primum propè ipsa urbis mœnia ducendas copias arbitror, quò et amici atque boni cives animum resumant, et inimici ac perditi hostes patriæ inopinato metu perculsi, audaciam omnem consiliumque amittant. Quod si feceritis, permagna undique auxilia continuò ad vos confluent. Quis enim ambigat, et Bononienses et Lucenses ex hac parte, ex alterâ verò tum Senenses, tum etiam Perusinos vobis auxilio fore? His enim omnibus factio Cosmiana maximo est odio. Vos autem cum virtute gratiâque vestrâ, tum auctoritate et gratiâ hujus præstantissimi principis, incredibili benevolentiâ prosequuntur. Nullâ socordiâ utendum est, nullâ negligentiâ. Hoc tempore de summâ rerum decernendum.——Omnia sunt secunda vobis et inimicis adversa. Nisi vobis vos defueritis, actum est de omnibus illis impiis patriæ parricidis. Sentite quæso vobiscum omnes. Tollatur e medio omnis animorum offensio, si quæ in illis exulibus inter se privatim est reliqua. Communis vobis omnibus Cosmus est hostis, et idem patriæ non secus ac vobis infestus, et inimicus. Si hunc e medio sustuleritis, et vosmet ipsos et universam patriam jugo teterrimo liberabitis. Quod utinam, &c. &c." *Ep. Phil. ad Fam.*

"of me, I declare before God, I do not hate you. If "you do not act, as you ought to do, it cannot happen "from a want of understanding, for the whole world ac-"knowledges that to the greatest genius you have added "the greatest knowledge of affairs, and that nothing can "escape your penetration. Would to Heaven you could "be satisfied with the peaceful enjoyment of those bles-"sings which nature and fortune have poured upon you, "without extending your views higher than becomes you. "By what strange fatality is it, that almost all great men "have the weakness of being unable to bear an equal, "and are inflamed with a desire of governing and being "tyrants? How many evils are derived from this cor-"rupted source! I know the natural goodness of your "heart: Obey, obey its dictates. Your life will be then "less tempestuous, and your death must be more com-"posed (*h*)."

The

(*h*) "Quo tu es in me animo, Cosme, melius nemo novit quam ipse tu. At ego si quid irarum conceperam adversus te, satis mihi videor id omne vel evomuisse vel concoxisse. Nam medius fidius te nunquam odi, sed indignè me affectum abs te indignè patiebar.——Non es tu, Cosme, obtusioribus quibusdam sensibus, sed cum ingenii acrimoniâ intelligis quantumvis, tum rerum usu permultâque peritiâ nihil est quod minus calleas. Sed utinam vel naturæ vel fortunæ bono uti malles, quam supra civem appetere! Id enim et tibi et patriæ plurimum conduceret. Nam et ipse omnibus charissimus fores et patriæ tantum naufragium non intulisses. Verum plerique omnes qui et animi magnitudine et ingenii vigent acrimoniâ, in eo ut plurimum morbo sunt, ut pares non facilè admittant, sed quâvis ratione præesse omnibus et tanquam dominari velint. Hinc et privatæ et publicæ simultates oriuntur, hinc pestiferæ factiones, hinc seditiones, hinc tandem civilia bella cum ingenti patriæ calamitate, exitio, interitu manant.——Es tu, Cosme, naturâ lenis, facilis, affabilis. Hanc si ducem sequi quam improborum consilia malueris, et vives benè et morieris melius." (*Ep. Phil. ad Fam.*)—I have literally translated Monsr.

The exiles had fed themselves with the delusive hopes, that as the Milanese army approached, the Florentines would rise in their favour, and Cosmo de' Medici was not entirely at his ease. A body of the ecclesiastical troops was at no great distance, and though Eugenius was neither his personal enemy, nor disposed to hostilities against him; yet as they were under the orders of the Cardinal Vitelleschi Cornetano, a sworn foe to Cosmo, the circumstance did not lessen his anxiety. A letter from the treacherous prelate was intercepted, or fell by accident into Cosmo's hands, from whence it was conveyed to the Pope, who instantly directed the Cardinal to be strangled (*a*). The Patriarch of Aquileia succeeded him in the command, and he had orders to support the Medici.

Piccinino

Tenhoven, but in this and many other quotations from different authors the text differs in matter sometimes as well as substance.—For the variations I am not answerable.

(*a*) The Cardinal appears from Machiavel to have been fully aware of the maxim that between the imprisonment and death of great men the distance is not great. How he died the historian leaves uncertain. "Il castellano confortando con umane parole il Patriarca, e dandogli speranza di bene, gli rispose: Che gli uomini grandi non si pigliavano per lasciarli, e quelli che meritavano d' esser presi, non meritavano d' esser lasciati; e così poco di poi morì in carcere."

Machiavelli, lib. 5. *p.* 265, 266. *tom.* i.

Paulus Jovius observes, "Magnum et memorabile insolentis fortunæ exemplum inusitato sacratis viris exitu, præbuit Johannes Vitellius." (*Illust. Vir. Elog. lib.* 2. 83). But we may excuse the warmth of a Bishop on the death of a Cardinal.

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Piccinino appeared at the gates of Florence, and flattered himself that the most trifling degree of violence would be sufficient to introduce him. They fired on his trumpets, and he did not make a single movement to protect them. His capital error was an injudicious and rapid retreat into the neighbourhood of Casentino, where he was occupied in some useless conquests, when the orders reached him to evacuate Tuscany without delay, the troops being wanted for other services. Before he obeyed, he was desirous of trying his fortune in a general action, and by a forced march he was on the point of surprising the enemy at Anghiari. The Florentines rallied and obtained the victory. This engagement, which decided the fate of the exiles and the Medici, was one of those Italian combats, that have been already noticed, and would only create a smile on the face of a modern general.

Death and character of Rinaldo D' Albizzi.

Rinaldo D' Albizzi, proud, haughty, violent, vindictive, and uncontroulable, to whom Scipio Ammirati has with great propriety applied the expression of "Terri-"bil Cervello," but who with all his foibles and his faults had many great and brilliant qualities, led afterwards a wandering life, and died in exile (*b*). Visconti,

(*b*) "Uomo veramente in ogni fortuna onorato, ma più ancora stato sarebbe, se la natura l' avesse in una città unita fatto nascere; perchè molte sue qualità in una città divisa l' offesero che in una unita l' avrebbero premiato," (*Machiavelli, lib.* 5. *p.* 278. *tom.* 1.), is the compressed character of D' Albizzi by the Florentine historian.

Visconti, the protector of D' Abizzi, soon followed his friend to the grave, and as he left no male issue, his subjects on his death erected a republic. The morning of their freedom was serene and beautiful; clouds and darkness overcast the evening! Venice made an unsuccessful effort to subdue them, and they owed their prosperity to the person, against whom of all others they had afterwards reason to find they ought to have been most upon their guard (*c*). Francesco Sforza, the son-in-law of the last Duke, aspired to his rich inheritance.—Cosmo de' Medici had been one of his ancient friends, and to the private assistance which he afforded him from his own purse (*d*), he would willingly have added the public force

(*c*) Filippo Maria Visconti leaving only a natural daughter married to Francesco Sforza, several princes laid claim to the Dutchy of Milan. Frederic the IIIrd demanded it as an escheat to the empire, the Duke leaving no legitimate issue. Alphonso, King of Naples, endeavoured to establish his title under the Duke's will, who had made him his heir, and the Duke of Orleans insisted on a prior right as the son of Valentina, the late Duke's sister. Sforza urged his adoption by the Duke, and his marriage with his acknowledged daughter. The citizens tore the Duke's will into pieces, elected twelve magistrates, formed a republic, and appointed Sforza the general of their army, forgetting the maxim that "Veri convenendosi la spada a quella mano che vuole scetro."

(*d*) "At Cosmus notâ ductoris regna petentis
Pauperie, huic auri pondera magna tulit,
Atque ait, O Soceri, petiturus regna Philippi
Ductor Sforcigenûm, jam mea dicta notes.
Hæc dedimus, quæ sunt vestræ via prima salutis,
Pondera; consumptis his quoque plura dabo.
Ne timeas, metus omnis abest, da carbasa ventis,
Pergito, non deërunt omnia nostra tibi.
Si nummi vincunt, herclè est fas vincere nobis."

Avogadrii, de relig. et magnif. Cosm. Med. l. 2.

force of Florence, if such a measure had been within the compass of his power.

Neri Capponi.

Neri Capponi, a citizen of Florence of great merit, enjoyed a high degree of public reputation and esteem, without being at the head of any party (*e*). A long intimacy had subsisted between him and Cosmo, and though they differed respecting the conduct of the state on the present emergency, the question was argued with temper and moderation. "It would be very dangerous," observed Capponi, "for us to break with Venice, and "your friend would be no sooner Duke of Milan, than "like his predecessors, he would be our most disagree-"able neighbour; let us then assist the new republic. It "is the best step that we can take." Cosmo replied, "Nothing could add to the respect he entertained for his "advice, but he wished him to re-consider it. That no-"thing could be more proper, or more prudent, if it "was possible that Milan could maintain its freedom; "but to suppose that possibility would be an insult to "the understanding; that Milan must of necessity fall "under the subjection of Sforza or Venice; that the first "alternative was doubtless preferable; and that the im-"portance and evidence of the fact gave him hopes of "converting him to his opinion, which appeared the "most eligible and advantageous for their government."

Cosmo

(*e*) "Assai amici, e pochi Partigiani." *Machiavelli, lib.* 5. *p.* 341. *tom.* i.

Cosmo de' Medici did not prevail on Capponi, nor Capponi on Cosmo. Their different opinions held Florence in suspense, and whilst the Gordian knot was unravelling, it was cut without hesitation by Sforza's seizure of Milan. There was no further room for deliberation. Florence and Sforza entered into a strict alliance, which was opposed by a like treaty between Venice and Naples. A war followed between these allied powers, but it had no apparent object, and was not marked by any actions of material consequence. Each party was tired with it, or appeared exhausted, when the capture of Constantinople and the danger of the West served as a pretext for their laying down their arms.

Was it from motives of pure friendship, it may be asked, that the Medici had so warmly espoused the cause of Sforza? Of what nature was their union, and what common interest knit them to each other?

Cosmo formed the idea of planting the illustrious warrior in Lombardy with the principal design of gathering the fruit. Sforza appeared to him a proper instrument to gratify the first and darling object of his heart, which had always panted to enlarge the Florentine territories by some considerable conquest; and Sforza had accordingly stipulated if he was successful to employ himself in annexing Lucca to their dominions.

In the 14th century, it will be recollected, they had purchased Lucca, and that it was soon afterwards taken by the inhabitants of Pisa. From this period they had never lost sight of it, and in 1430 they had besieged it. This siege had brought on the crisis, which placed Cosmo at the head of the state. Its conduct had been committed to the patricians, and as they were unsuccessful, the Medici and their friends were lavish in their invectives against the generals, and ruined them in the opinion of the public. Irritated by these observations, and the clamours which the Medici did their utmost to increase, the patricians exerted themselves in their turn to ruin Cosmo; his exile followed, consequently, his restoration.

After his return the same projects were resumed against Lucca, and the stipulation was entered into with Sforza; though the illustrious adventurer no sooner became master of Milan, than he adopted the maxims of the Visconti his predecessors. He did not indeed break with Cosmo de' Medici, on the contrary, they seemed to live in their usual friendship, but there is a sort of inconsistency in his conduct, which is not very advantageous to his character. He appears rather to have been desirous of retaining Lucca for himself, as its protector, than of fulfilling his engagement with Cosmo, and ceding it to him on the principles of gratitude and honour. These are undoubtedly virtues, which are seldom visible

in public life, yet a contrary system is strictly the "En-"gannamundo" of the Spaniard. In the school of strict political jurisprudence a more respectable science is developed, which, instead of weakening, strengthens the bands of civil society, and tends to general happiness. Fraud, finesse, stratagem, oblique and subtle views do little honour to the moral character of man, and success produced by their means is in reality disgrace!

Cosmo de' Medici, obliged to renounce his favourite idea, endeavoured to console himself by the acquisition of Borgo St. Sepolcro, of Montedoglio, Casentino, and Val di Bagno, with which he rôunded the Florentine territories. They contained about that time nearly two thirds of Tuscany. Exclusive of the capital and the new acquisitions, five principal cities with their appendages were comprised within them. Arezzo, a Tuscan town, celebrated even in the Punic wars, had passed near the middle of the preceding century under their dominion. Some time afterwards, Pistoia, an ancient town, and during the middle age a fatal, as well as infamous nest of dissentions, and civil wars, was incorporated with them. Volterra, built as a protection against pirates, capitulated before 1362, and the Neapolitan Ladislas having seized Cortona, another Tuscan town, sold it in 1415 to the Florentines. Pisa, a Grecian colony,

> "——Alpheæ ab origine Pisa:
> Urbs Etrusca solo (*f*),"

long

(*f*) *P. Virgilii, Æneid.* 10. 179—180.

CHAP. I.

Additions to the Florentine dominions.

long the rival of Genoa and Venice, and the most celebrated European market, was the most important of their conquests. Pisa fell into their hands in 1405, and the little republics of Colle, Prato, Barga, Empoli, and St. Miniato were swallowed up in succession. These different cities brought along with them a vast increase of strength, and what is not always true when applied to great empires, Florence became more powerful as her limits became more extensive.—Vast powers in general may be compared to vast clouds, which disappear as they spread over a larger surface of the atmosphere.—An experienced minister disclaims the device of Charles the Vth, "Plus oultre," and applauds in preference the edict of Augustus, "De imperio inter fines coercendo."

Cosmo de' Medici virtually reigned in Florence from 1439 to 1455, and the vigour of his genius triumphed over the volatile and the fickle disposition of his fellow-citizens. At last, in the strange vicissitudes of human life, an event, that appeared the most favourable to his power, shook it. His intimacy with Capponi had not prevented a kind of secret rivality between them, which had a check on the Medici party, united them, and kept them in obedience to their chief. Death removed the rival, and as the danger disappeared, division, insubordination, intemperance, and avarice succeeded. The most dangerous enemy, that faction has to encounter, is frequently within itself; and to satisfy the friend of our

bosom

bosom is, on some occasions, a task of more difficulty than to resist an enemy.

Cosmo de' Medici by his prudence at first arrested the progress of these fatal divisions, but at length the presumptuous Pitti escaped him, and became less the master than the tyrant of his country; which Cosmo had governed with as much moderation as his interests admitted. The city was now abandoned to the pillage of a few individuals, and became the prey of twenty little serpents, who disputed between themselves, the power of tearing it in pieces with their poisoned fangs.—Pitti, to supply the funds for the construction of a palace, which might vie with the Escurial, the Vatican, or the Louvre in magnificence, levied many taxes and impositions on the inhabitants (*a*). Cosmo was not himself exempt from the legal plunder, and was compelled to furnish his quota of the contribution. Old and weak, he had recourse to the expedient of the old and weak, dissimulation. It is a striking singularity, that a zealous partisan of the hostile faction, enlightened by indignation, had in

Lucca Pitti acquires an ascendancy.

(*a*) Machiavel mentions other unjustifiable methods which Lucca Pitti made no scruple of employing. "Oltre a questo tutti gli sbanditi, e qualunque altro avesse commesso OMICIDIO O FURTO o altra cosa perchè egli temesse pubblica penitenza, purchè e' fusse persona a quella edificazione utile dentro a quelli edifici sicuro si rifuggiva." *Machiavelli, lib. 7. p. 345. tom. i.*

in some measure predicted to Cosmo his present situation. In 1440 he writes to him:

" How (*b*) sorrowful a life you lead, but how much more " sorrowful one awaits you; abandoned as you are to the " caprices of fortune, and in the midst of difficulties and " dangers! Your most dangerous enemies are not those " that you suppose to be so. You have more to fear " from the idols of your own worship. Without any " friendship for you, it is your gold which they adore. " If they really had a regard for you, would they with- " out ceasing stimulate you to ruin the best citizens, to " plunder and to murther them? These cunning gen- " try are aware, that the more they can embroil you " with the best and most respectable part of your fellow- " citizens, you are the more necessarily within their pow- " er.

(*b*) Qualis tibi vita esse debet, Cosme Medices, cum omnes fortunas tuas vides in aleâ. Non enim hi solum, quos per civiles contentiones tibi esse inimicos retis, tibi sunt metuendi, sed isti magis quibus te charum et admirabilem opinaris. Non enim te diligunt sed nummos tuos. Nam si ullâ te charitate complecterentur, non te ad rapinam bonorum civium, non ad perniciem, non ad vastitatem, non ad cædem exhortarentur. Intelligunt homines callidissimi, quamdiu Optimatum odio laboraveris, in suâ te potestate necessariò futurum. Quare semper aliquid a te capiunt, aliquid poscunt, aliquid expectant. Quicquid autem improbè, flagitiosè, facinorosè impièque patrarint, te auctorem totius sceleris, te principem, te signiferum profitentur, ac tuis se opibus tuentur. Quæ ubi diutius ferre non poteris (non enim tantam scelerum ac nequitiarum licentiam æquo animo perferas) libidinem atque furorem suum in te armabunt, tuas pecunias sitient, tuis se nummis ingurgitare, omni arte, omni fraude, omnibus denique insidiis molientur. In caput tuum per omnem vim et contumeliam conjurabunt." *Ex Epist. Phil. ad Cosm. Med.*

" er. Daily from this circumstance are they soliciting " you for new favours, which you must grant them. If " they attempt any thing of an evil tendency, they pre- " tend you are the author of it, and the origin of the " mischief. Behind your name in this manner they shel- " ter themselves. When at last you are no longer able " to submit to such odious excesses (for I will do you " the justice to declare that I believe a time will come " when you will not regard them with indifference), " they will then turn with fury and resentment against " you. More than any other person, you are exposed " to their profligate designs. They will neglect no means " of glutting their avarice at your expence, and neither " your fortune nor your life is safe from their criminal " enterprises.

After eight years of involuntary and forced dissimulation the genius of Cosmo de' Medici seemed to be again soaring, and on the point of triumphing over every inferior obstacle, which had embarrassed it. Death abridged his fresh career of glory, and carried him off at the age of seventy-five, a term of life at which none of his descendants arrived, the cruel and celebrated female alone excepted, in whom the legitimate branch of the family expired. He was universally regretted, and the respect for him even put some bounds to the general rapacity. Public extortion reigned afterwards almost without controul, and fears were entertained, that every puny despot

Death of Cosmo de' Medici.

 would

would extend his little circle of oppressions as far as he was able. Most of the Christian princes lamented his loss, and the whole city in tears followed his ashes to the grave. The church of St. Laurence was chosen for the place of his interment, and every order of the state unanimously bestowed on him the title of the Father of his Country!—A great and glorious title! superior to every other which his posterity might have added on his tomb! (*c*).

If Cosmo de' Medici had been the legal and established sovereign of his country, the sententious maxim of Bruyere, "Nommer un roi pere du peuple, ou de la "patrie, c'est moins faire son eloge, que l'appeller par "son nom, ou faire sa definition," would have been his "due.

It is of little consequence what was the colour of his complexion, and whether his hair was black or brown; but his stature was majestic, and his countenance inspired respect and awe. A vulgar air, a crippled figure, with the face of Thersites, are powerful impediments in the way

(*c*) "Concessit fato Cosmus septuaginta amplius natus annos, tumulatusque est Laurentiano in templo ab se condito, ut tota sacra æde instar amplissimi sepulchri vir incomparabilis et civium maximus, nequaquem angusto loculo tegeretur, cum hoc brevi titulo, sed longe omnium qui inscribi possint honestissimo. COSMUS MEDICUS HIC SITUS EST DECRETO PUBLICO PATER PATRIÆ."

P. Iovius—Illust. Virorum Elog. lib. 3. p. 121. Florent. 1551.

way of elevation, when it depends on popular favour; and the Roman emperor, compared by Vopiscus to a disgraceful deity of the Latin calendar, had the good fortune to have hereditary claims to the throne he filled, and to be born within the Purple of the palace.

Posterity has not yet determined whether the virtues of Cosmo de' Medici were real, or only specious and affected. Henry Stephens, a bitter enemy of the House of Medici, hath passed a severe censure on him in the following passage: "Côme a été loué pour sa libéralité "envers le peuple, mais cela ne tendait qu'à tirannie, & "n'était cette douceur si non un appas & hameçon jetté "pour prendre les poissons & les manger puis après. "Cette finesse ne se peut apeller vertu, d'autant que les "actions vertueuses n'ont d'autre but que la vertu, & "perdent ce nom incontinent qu'elles visent ailleurs. "L'effet à montré a quelle fin tendait cette ombre de "vertu." (*d*).

Character of Cosmo de' Medici.

Cosmo de' Medici was ambitious without doubt, but ambition is a middle term between vice and virtue. Beyond a certain point it ceases to be virtue; before it reaches that point it is scarcely vice. They who judge of human actions, as they are extraordinary rather than as

(*d*) *Discours merveilleux sur la vie et les actions et deportements de la Reyne Catherine de Médicis.*

as just, and as brilliant rather than as virtuous, will not fail to applaud the system on which Cosmo governed. There are others to whom his ambition, according to the point of view from which they draw their observations, will appear as laudable, excusable, or criminal: laudable, considering the great talents it brought forward and into play—excusable in contemplation of his formidable opponents, and the just fears that might be entertained from them of his own ruin, and that of the republic;—Criminal, if the maxim is well founded that the government, whatever it may be under which we live, is sacred!—The most scrupulous might perhaps be of opinion D' Albizzi would have thought and acted as he did, and that Florence, doomed to perish, might have been dragged to the precipice by the hands of some of her more abandoned sons. The supposition may be correct, yet are we justified on the broad sound principles of morality, in the commission of an evil action to prevent another, and are our crimes to be defended by those of others?

It is a lamentable truth that states and kingdoms have often sunk from freedom into servitude, provided they have not been startled by the name, and have suffered without emotion their dearest liberties, by little and little, to be wrested from them. Cosmo, from his knowledge of the world, had learnt the important lesson, and studiously concealing the power he had usurped, he made

no attempt at any apparent change in the constitution, whilst he destroyed its substance, and reduced it to a skeleton and to a shadow. An additional honour or title might have created an alarm, and he guarded against it with uncommon care and prudence. Fear and hope, the two great springs of government, were the ladders and the steps by which he mounted; and his masterly use of them raised him, as it were without design, above the other magistrates. Of his fortune he was certainly the founder, but two able friends lent their assistance in pushing on the wheel, his relation Everardo of singular intrepidity, and Pucci Pucci, (*e*) whose talents and address were so much acknowledged, that the party for a long time bore his name.

Immense riches, boundless liberality, captivating manners, a considerable share of eloquence, exquisite art, vigour, the most refined though concealed policy (*f*), and indefatigable patience were the instruments with which Cosmo

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(*e*) "Quotidiè Puccini homines impurissimi per veneficos ac sicarios vitæ nostræ insidias tendunt. *Ep. Philelph. ex Senâ*, 1437.

Unicè me perturbat Venetos justissimos sanctissimosque viros Puccinorum socios appellari, si qua fortassè rationi et constantiæ cum temeritate et furore, si fidei cum perfidiâ, si pietati cum scelere esse societas ulla possit." *Epist. Philelph.*

(*f*) "Cosmum ejusmodi virum esse animadverto, qui et simulet et dissimulet omnia. Estque usque adeo taciturnus, ut ne ab intimis quidem familiaribus ac domesticis queat intelligi." *Epist. Philelph.*

Cosmo acquired the high station he had usurped (*g*). With all these numerous resources, a zeal for the cause of religion must not be forgotten, and his outward demonstration of piety, feigned perhaps, though it might be real. The convent of St. Mark was his favourite place of resort, where he honoured the spiritual Fathers with frequent visits, and a room is still shewn with some little pride in which they conversed together. But his piety was never suffered to enervate his political activity, and he seemed to have infused into his whole conduct the spirit of the maxim he often repeated, that "States "are not to be governed by a Pater Noster." Had Cosmo lived in the golden days of Florence in all likelihood he would have failed in his usurpation. Giovanni della Bella and Corso Donati with the same views paid the forfeit of their lives; and in their times Cosmo either would not have attempted what he succeeded in, or would not have succeeded in it, if he had attempted it. A few years however had worked a complete change in the republic. Its ancient simplicity had been sapped and undermined by luxury (*h*), and the greatest part of the inhabitants of

(*g*) In the words of Varchi, "Con palesi e manifeste virtu, con secreti e nascosti vizi fatto capo di una Republica piu tosto non serva che libera."

(*h*) Aretin hath left us a sketch of the Florentine manners at this period. "Ego non matrimonium duntaxat consummavi, sed patrimonium insuper unis nuptiis consumpsi. Incredibile est, quam multa impendantur his novis et jam ad fastidium usque deductis moribus. Nec ego nunc sane de conviviis loquor, quanquam vacuefeci

of Florence (they do not deserve the name of citizens) were so corrupt as to sell their country. That virtuous and pure morality was no longer to be found (*a*), which is the best, the firmest, and indeed the only rampart of real liberty.

Cosmo de' Medici purchased what the Florentines put up to sale, and reduced under his subjection a set of luxurious and effeminate slaves, that voluntarily fastened on their chains. Yet some portion of applause is certainly his due for the lenity and mildness of his administration; and a government hardly deserves the name of tyranny, in which even the robes of office were not necessary, and the usurper exercised his authority, to make use of his own expression, "Con Capuccio," in the ordinary and common dress of the people. Good sense and power, established on a firm and sound foundation, have no occasion for state trappings, and consider with Marcus Aurelius,

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forum et aromatarias tabernas; coquos, fartores, aucupes, notos et ignotos pariter fatigavi. Verum hæc licet sint magna, tamen non sunt magna, propterea quod rumoris plus habent quam impensæ, et plus strepitûs inferunt quam damni. Sed illa intolerabilia, quod vestitu mundoque muliebri nullus est finis. Vellem ut Romani isti tui, quibus ex vetere gloriâ nihil præter inanem jactantiam remansit, aurum, argentum, purpuram, margaritas, cæterumque ornatum mulierum Florentinarum conspicerent, ut desinerent aliquando tam absurdè de se ipsis opinari."

Ex Epist. Leonardi Aretini Kal. Apr. 1410.

(*a*) "Nota ch'al tempo del populo vecchio (1250) e poi a gran tempo i cittadini di Firenze viveano sobrii, e di grosse vivande, e con poche spese, e buoni costumi,

 Aurelius, "Pomp but as a bone thrown amongst the dogs." Cosmo

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e vestivano grossi panni loro, e loro donne. E molti portavano le pelli scoperte senza panno, e le berrette in capo: e la maggior parte con gli usatti in gamba, e le donne sanza ornamenti, e passavano la maggior parte d' una gonnella stretta, e di grosso scarlatino di proino e dicamo, e cinte d' uno scheggiale all' antica, e uno mantello foderato di vaio coll' tassello di sopra: e portavanlo in capo delle communi donne vestite d' uno grosso verde di cambragio. Per lo simile modo lire cento era comune dota: lire dugento o trecento in quel tempo era tenuta dota grandissima, e le più delle pulcelle aveano anni XX. o più che andassono a marito."

Ricord. Malespini.

"Fiorenza dentro dalla cerchia antica,
. . . .
Si stava in pace sobria e pudica.
Non avea catenella, non corona,
Non donne contigiate, non cintura,
Che fosse a veder più, che la persona.
Non faceva, nascendo, ancor paura
La figlia al padre, &c. &c.
Non avea case di famiglia vote:
Non v'era giunto ancor Sardanapalo
Amostrar ciò che'n camera si puote.
Bellincion Berti vid'io andar cinto
Di cuojo e d'osso, e venir dallo specchio
La donna sua, sanza'l viso dipinto:
E vidi quel de' Nerli e quel del Vecchio
Esser contenti alla pelle scoverta,
E le sue donne al fuso ed al pennecchio:
O fortunate! e ciascuna era certa
Della sua sepoltura; ed ancor nulla
Era per Francia nel letto deserta.
L' una vegghiava a studio della culla,
E consolando usava l' idioma,
Che pria li padri e le madri trastulla:
L' altra traendo alla rocca la chioma
Favoleggiava, con la sua famiglia,
De' Trojani, e di Fiesole, e di Roma."

Dante Parad. Canto 15. 97—117.

Cosmo saw the advantage to be reaped from modesty and moderation, but notwithsanding in his manner of life, his conversation, and his family alliances he was strictly the Republican; his actions and his liberality equalled, if they did not exceed, those of many sovereigns in magnificence and splendour.

An Italian monk has curiously observed, that Providence and Cosmo had entered into a holy contest (*b*), and tried to surpass each other in munificence; and a book of accounts in his own hand is still preserved, in which there is an entry of the following import. "In "settling my ledger, I have never been yet able to liqui- "date my debts to God. The more I give, the more I "receive; and thus I am always in arrears to Provi- "dence (*c*)."

Great as Cosmo's liberality was, and greatly as it was applauded, there yet were persons, who saw in it unnecessary extravagance and censurable profusion. Maffei of Verona, an ancestor perhaps of the Marquis of that name,

(*b*) "Pareva che corresse una santa gara trà la liberalità di Dio verso Cosimo, e quella di Cosimo verso Dio." *P. Negri.*

(*c*) "In ratione dati et accepti, nunquam eo devenire potui, ut solverem Deo quæ debui; quò enim plura tribuo, eò plura recipio; et sic semper me debitorem, Deum verò creditorem invenio."

 name, made his court to him by publishing an apology for his conduct, in which the detractor acknowledges his error. "I bless the instant," he says, "which "brought us together. Liberality is now no more in "my eyes a species of generous insanity, and I lament "my fortune will not admit of following Cosmo's exam-"ple, and exercising the virtue of magnificence.—You "deceive yourself," replies Maffei, "this virtue springs "from the heart, poverty does not exclude it, and I "know a magnificent beggar."

Parallel between Cosmo de' Medici and Pericles.

Many writers have drawn a parallel between Pericles and Cosmo de' Medici, and amongst them Lord Littleton has introduced them to each other in the Elysian fields, whither he has lately descended to join Lord Chesterfield. Great resemblance is however perfectly compatible with some slight variety, and the men and events that are the nearest alike, are not still the same.—The generous Cimon and the admirable Thucydides were other characters, and more formidable antagonists than the conceited and presumptuous D'Albizzi, the imprudent Barbadora, and the feeble Strozzi.—Cosmo de' Medici had not the happiness to preserve his hands as pure and unstained with blood as Pericles; and though without an impediment, like his father, in his speech, and possessed of some little flow of words, he is not to be compared with one of the orators of the most eloquent nation in the world, who, on being thrown in a struggle to the

the ground, convinced the spectators he had not fallen. Cosmo de' Medici's liberalities were supplied by his own purse, those of the lover and consort of Aspasia out of the rich treasures brought from Delos, swoln with the contributions of many other parts of Greece. The Athenians dated their decline from the moment of his death, and his dissipation tended to subject them to a Foreign yoke. On the same rock the Florentines might have split, if one of their own citizens had not usurped the government.— Cosmo de' Medici has also been compared to Pisistratus, but such parallels, without the masterly hand of Plutarch, have more show than substance or solidity (*d*).

The source of Cosmo's immense expenditure lay in his commerce, carried perhaps further than we have any other instance. His house was distinguished above all others for its various manufactories, and its exportations of

(*d*) "Fu Cosimo per prudenza, e per grandezza d' animo, per modestia, e per ricchezze, di tanta riputazione nella sua patria e in tutta Italia, che per cittadino privato, dopo la declinazion dell' Impero Romano, non fuvvi Città o Repubblica che ne avesse avuto un simile a lui. Ma fra tutte le qualità che distinguer lo fecero, fu l' esser sopra tutti gli altri uomini liberale. Piero suo figliuolo nel volere dopo la sua morte riconoscere le sue sostanze, ritrovò che non vi era Cittadino alcuno di distinzione, a cui Cosimo grossa somma di danari non avesse prestata: e molte volte senza esser richiesto, quando intendeva la necessità di un uomo nobile, la sovveniva. Adorno di tutte queste qualità Principesche, fu nondimeno tanto temperato nelle sue azioni, che la civil modestia mai non trapassò, perchè nelle conversazioni, nel cavalcare, in tutti i modi del vivere, e ne' parentadi fu sempre simile a qualunque modesto Cittadino."

Memoire Istoriche per servire alla vita di piu uomini illustri della Toscana, tom. i. 21. 4to. *Liverno* 1757.

of wool, a branch of trade which his countrymen, as active, as ingenious, and as free, had already pushed to a great extent, supplying by the force of industry the disadvantage of their situation, and their distance from a port; yet banking bills of exchange, remittances, and loans of money, were the principal articles of his traffic.

We read in the Memoirs of Philip Commines, that Cosmo de' Medici, "qui fut le chef de cette maison, et "la commença, homme digne d' estre nommé entre les "tres-grands; et en son cas, qui estoit de marchandise, "estoit la plus grande maison que je croy qui jamais ait "esté au monde: car leurs serviteurs et facteurs ont eu "tant de credit, sous couleur de ce nom (12) Medicis, "que ce seroit merveilles à croire à ce que j' en ay "veu en Flandres et en Angleterre: j'en ay veu un, ap-"pellé Guerard Quanvese, presque estre occasion de "soustenir le Roy Edoüard le quart en son estat, estant en "grant guerre en son royaume d' Angleterre, et fournir "par fois audit roy plus de six vingts mille escus, où il "fit peu de profit pour son maistre: toutesfois il re-"couvra ses pieces à la longue. Un autre ay veu, nommé "et appellé Thomas Portunay, (13) estre pleige entre le-"dit Roy Edoüard et le Duc Charles de Bourgogne, pour "cinquante mille escus, (14) et une autre fois, en un lieu, "pour quatre-vingts mille. Je ne loüe point les mar-"chands d' ainsi le faire: mais je loüe bien un prince de "tenir bons termes aux marchands, et leur tenir vérité:

"car

"car ils ne sçavent à quelle heure ils en pourront avoir "besoin : car quelquefois peu d' argent fait grand ser-"vice (*e*)."

Cosmo de' Medici's knowledge of commerce was such, that not only his agents and factors became rich and opulent, but those who entered into such speculations, solicited his advice, and were directed by it. The immense wealth he had acquired was matter of public astonishment as well as public importance; and the Venetian law, which prohibits their nobles entering into any traffic, might owe its origin to the influence it had given Cosmo. It may be said, that the extreme poverty of many of the Venetian nobles may be productive of as serious consequences, and is equally dangerous to St. Mark. In a candid discussion of the subject it would be only just to recollect, that the accomplices of the Marquis de Bedemar were all either foreigners, or Venetians (*f*) without rank, and that he could not engage a single noble, rich or poor, in the conspiracy. The majority of the Aristocrats then lived, it is not to be denied, in a luxurious and torpid apathy; and if an indigent nobility were ever to be roused by any energy and courage, they would in such a case be the most dangerous enemies of the community. The

(*e*) "Memoires de Messir Philippe Commines."
Livre 7. *c.* 6. *tom.* i. 443. 4*to.* 1797.

(*f*) "Langlade, Rinaldo, J. Piero, Jaffiero."

CHAP. I.

The authors of the Universal History have suggested that the Medici discovered new channels of trade unknown to other countries, which were again lost with them. Such an idea is however a mere imaginary one, and rests upon their supposition, unsubstantiated by any facts. La Noue has demonstrated that neither Solomon, the wisest of monarchs, Midas, the most foolish of his cotemporaries, the Argonauts, Raimond Lulle the Catalonian, Paracelsus, Arnaud de Villeneuve, nor even Cosmo de' Medici had discovered the philosophical stone. The grand secret of converting lead into pure gold, or the art of the transmutation of metals, according to him, had only been known to a certain set of cunning personages who filled the papal chair (*g*). Balthazar Cossa, who, with the education of a pirate, was elected Pope in the council of Pisa, by the name of John XXII. and deposed in that of Constance, had died a Car-

(*g*) "Il y en a de si aheurtés en leurs opinions, qu' on ne leur sauroit dissuader, que la conversion des métaux ne soit possible. Vrayement pour leur faire plaisir je le croyrai, mais ce sera de la façon que me dit une fois une disciple de l' art à Paris. —— N' avez-vous, lui dis-je, aucun exemple antique ou moderne d'aucun qui ait trouvé le secret? Je n' en sache qu' un, dit-il, qui y soit parvenu. Je vous prie de me dire qui il est. C' est, repliqua-t' il, cestuy-là. Mais qui? je n' ay garde de le cognoistre si vous ne me le nommez autrement. C' est cestuy-là. Comment? vous voulez vous moquer de moi? Il faut donc, adjousta-t' il, que je le vous déclare. C' est le Saint Père, qui a fait cognoistre à tous nos soufleurs que ce ne sont que des lanterniers, lesquels en plusieurs années ne font autre cas que multiplier leur tout en rien: et luy tous les ans, seulement en France, transmue et multiplie quarante livres de plomb qu' il y envoye (qui peuvent valoir deux escus) en quatre mille livres d' or (qui valent six cens mille escus) puis en fait une attraction jusqu' à Rome. Vrayement, lui dis-je, je vous donneray dix escus, dequoy m' avez si dien esclaircy vôtre cœur, mais je vous conseille de ne pas tenir ce langage en ceste ville, car

a Cardinal at Florence, and left vast treasures he had acquired by sea and land. Some writers have pretended that his great friends Cosmo and his father succeeded to them, though Paulus Iovius (*a*) rejects this opinion, which is notwithstanding very probable.

Cosmo de' Medici formed a most valuable library in his palace with which he amused himself, as appears by some lines of one of his obscure panegyrists :

"O mira

---

vous seriez incontinent par Mrs. de Sorbonne déclaré hérétique à dix-sept carats et demy. Là dessus nous nous despartimes —— et je me mis à considèrer la proprieté occulte de ceste cabale authentique, et après avoir bien ruminé dessus, je trouvay que mon petit soufleur avoit mieux rencontré en ce qu' il m' avoit dit qu' en ce qu' il avoit fait. Mais pour ce qu' il faisoit trop chaud pour reciter ce conte, je le cachay en un coin de ma memoire." *De la Noue Discours. Milit. Polit.* 688, 689.

(*a*) "Rerum admiratione ducti nonnulli cives, ut incomparabiles magnificentiæ laudes verbis elevarent, sæpe dictitabant tantam vim inexhaustæ pecuniæ, nequaquam ex argentariorum negociatione, quæ in omnibus Europæ emporiis a Cosmi institoribus exerceretur, sed ex Balthassaris Cossæ thesauris provenisse, quos uti vir eximiè probus et pius condendis templis atque Cœnobiis perfudisset ut delegantis mortui amici secreta vota impleret, et fidem suam sine piaculo tueretur. Constat ex adversariis rationum codicibus, quos ipsi vidimus, Cosmum supra quadraginta myriades aureorum nummum, in primata et publica edificia contulisse. Piæ verò aut occultæ largitionis sumptum myriadum decem summam excessisse. Verùm eam suspicionem facile apud rerum peritos avertebant paternæ opes, quæ signata pecunia, et quæstuosissima mensariorum negociatione immensæ prope constiterant, quum nullum unquam alienæ decoctionis, aut suæ conturbationis detrimentum per multos annos accepisset. Prædiorum verò redditus astrictaque privati sumptus frugalitas quotidianam modicæ familiæ impensam facile superarent."

Paulus Iovius, Illuſt. Vir. El. lib. 3. 120.

Ammirato, Mr. Roscoe remarks, has cited Balthassar's will, (*Iſtoria Fior.* 2. 1047), by which it appeared very doubtful whether his effects would be sufficient to satisfy his legacies.

"· ·
O mira in tectis bibliotheca tuis!
Nunc legis altisoni sparsim pia scripta Maronis,
Nunc Augustini sacra notata pii,
Aut ea quæ Cicero, Senecæ moralibus atque
Insudas, memori mente notanda notans.
Interdum, ne fors semper tua pectora cura
Repleat, adveniant dulcia scripta jubes,
Et quando accedit Naso, vel quando Tibullus,
Aut priscis lectis sæpe moderna legis;
Atque novam laudans Musam, nova carmina spectans
Dicis, habet faciles hæc nova Musa modos (*b*)."

Yet with the cares of government and a due attention to his own private affairs, it is not possible to believe that he had many spare hours for study or literary leisure. The inspection of his extensive commerce, political intrigues, ambition, must have had strong claims on most of his time; but he loved and promoted, to a high degree, the arts and sciences; he encouraged abilities of every kind, fostered genius, and was the patron of letters and of learning. These are the brightest traits of his character, and they have immortalized his name! Some persons, with more refinement than judgment, have fancied they perceived in his marked attention to the arts and sciences concealed motives and great political address. Recalling to their memory the ancient Roman, who

Cosmo de' Medici's taste for learning and men of letters.

(*b*) *Avogadrii de Religione et Magnificentia Cosm. Med. lib.* 2. *published in Lam. Del. Erud. vol.* 12.

who wished to banish philosophy from the fear of its influence on the people; and supposing Cosmo to have very different views, they have concluded he seized with rapture every opportunity of employing the minds of his fellow-citizens, and of diverting their thoughts from the government.—To reason in this manner would be to reason too curiously.—To suppose him wholly ignorant, that effeminacy could be introduced into a well regulated state, under a form more seductive and less alarming, would impeach his understanding; to suspect it to have been the sole and only motive of his patronage of the arts and sciences, would be injurious to his honour and every moral principle. A genius, like Cosmo, born in any civilized country, must naturally be warmed with a genuine and disinterested admiration of the first ornaments of human life.

If we are disposed to form an impartial estimate of the obligations due to Cosmo de' Medici and his descendants, it may perhaps be necessary to revert to the state of society before they appeared in it. Let us return to the leaden or iron age of Europe, when it was in a sort of barbarism, or even to the days of chivalry, when each knight, cased in Gothic armour, was in perpetual motion, his understanding alone excepted (*c*), and left the toil

(*c*) "Nil animo, duris agitabant cuncta lacertis."

toil of thinking to monks and friars, if monks and friars ever thought. Let us reflect on the thick night of ignorance and error, which covered the face of Europe from the fall of the Western empire. A glow of pleasure, mixed with the profoundest veneration, will instantaneously be felt at the names of Cosmo and the other princes, who, catching a portion of his spirit and animated by his example, endeavoured to discompose that mass of darkness, and let in upon us the first gleam of the light we now enjoy. Nicholas V. one of the few Pontiffs who deserves to be remembered, Frederic de Montefeltro Duke of Urbino, Alphonso King of Naples, Mathias Corvinus King of Hungary, with some others, have, with Cosmo, a claim on the gratitude and homage of posterity. They reduced the chaos into order, and accomplished the grand work which had been attempted but with a partial and momentary success, if with any, by the great men before them, by the prodigies of their own times, by Charlemagne and Alfred.—The capture of Constantinople by the Turks had thrown the Christians into the greatest consternation, yet a doubt may still remain, whether it was an accident at which they ought to have rejoiced or wept. In one point of view, the rampart of the faithful had been removed by their barbarous enemies, and the furious Mussulmen established themselves in our quarter of the globe, without the hope of being soon forced back across the Hellespont, and threatened to enlarge their conquests.—In another, the

Capture of Constantinople, and its consequences to the arts and sciences, and learning.

the arts and sciences, driven out of their last entrenchment, took refuge in Europe. Learning and a taste for letters were transported into the West, and the long rays of light, which streaked a second time the Grecian sky, illuminated and beautified our hemisphere.

Time and experience have both determined the question. The Attic seeds scattered amongst us by the storm have fructified a hundred fold, whilst the power of the Grand Seignor, always formidable in itself, has diminished by the conduct of each succeeding Sultan, shut up like a statue in a temple, and his subjects have sunk into such a state of fanaticism, that the union of only two crowned heads was wanting to ruin the Ottoman empire for ever.

Were the Romans, the Reader may demand, when they formerly reduced Greece under their dominion, more advanced in civilization than the followers of Mahomet the Second?—In all probability they were, yet not so far as may be generally imagined. The ill-judged authority of the Roman Censor already alluded to, the ignorance of the Proconsul who conquered Corinth (*d*), the

(*d*) "Mummius tam rudis fuit, ut capta Corintho, cum maximorum artificum perfectas manibus tabulas ac statuas in Italiam portandas locaret, juberet prædici conducentibus, si eas perdidissent, novas eos redituros."

Vel. Patercul. lib. 1. *c.* 13.

the traces of rusticity of which Horace (*e*) complains in the brightest days of Rome, and that kind of tribute paid by Cicero and Virgil to ancient prejudices, with an indifference for every thing which had not a relation to a military (*f*) government, are so many proofs of the fact and circumstance.—Romulus, the son of Mars and nursling of a wolf, did not transmit to his descendants that happy temperament of blood and disposition, which was likely to inspire or produce the softer passions. Labourers and land-pirates, or conquerors, if the phrase is more agreeable, they only knew how to reap their harvests and to conquer. Porsenna, Brennus, and Hannibal had prevented their acquisition of other tastes, and left them no time for other occupations. The early barbarity of these slaves of liberty might have been excusable, if contented with their own defence, they had not wantonly attacked their neighbours. With some exceptions, allowable from their connexion with Greece previous to their subjection of it, they only began to value, as

(*e*) "——hodieque manent vestigra ruris."

Horat. Epist. lib. 2. 1. 160.

(*f*) "Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,
Credo equidem vivos ducent de marmore vultus,
Orabunt causas melius, cœlique meatus
Describent radio, et surgentia sidera dicent.
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hæ tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos."

Virgil. Æneid. lib. 6. 848.

as a nation, the polite arts and painting, when they had carried their arms into the heart of Achaia. As soon as these rustic heroes, endowed with great sense, and passionately fond of glory, had subdued the ancient world of genius, they were in their turn subdued by the manners, the arts and sciences of the people they had vanquished.—Rome had conquered Greece, Greece conquered Rome.—If satisfied with the labour of collecting the most admirable productions of the pencil, Rome did not distinguish herself by the practical part of the study; if she cherished the arts and sciences as much from an air of magnificence and grandeur, as from a taste for them; if she added nothing to the knowledge of her new masters, even in tactics and military movements; if even her imitative efforts were not always crowned with equal success, and she did not give birth to any original dramas, yet in satire, in epic, elegiac, and lyric poetry, in history and eloquence, she rivalled Greece in dignity, and was not even surpassed by Athens.

The Turks, transplanted from the lake Aral and the shores of the Caspian sea to the borders of the Hellespont and Ægean ocean, by no means copied the great example of the Romans. In the most delicious and benignant climate under Heaven, they still preserved the stern and rigid features of the Massagetes their ancestors; at least they did not borrow from the Greeks, as ten or twelve centuries before they had borrowed from the

Arabs,

CHAP. I. Arabs, whose language and religion they had adopted, and in part their manners.

The Koran, equalled only by the Talmud in absurdity, had plunged them deeper, if possible, in barbarism, as their foolish Muftis and stupid Dervises literally interpreted its texts condemning study, which the Arabs understand in a sense less natural but more worthy of their national character and their angel Gabriel. The Turkish soul, like the iron of the Turkish sabre, was too hard to bend or soften at the blaze of arts and letters, and these barbarians extinguished with their turbans the little light, which faintly glimmered. Contrary to their usual practice, the sciences escaped their pillage, and music charmed them. They adopted it from their new slaves, but it was no more the music of Arion, of Amphion, Timotheus, or Terpander, or that ancient Grecian music, which unlike our modern harmony founded on a just proportion of sounds, was drawn from the passions and a study of the inmost recesses of the human heart. Time, with the same influence it has on all other things, had weakened its powers and effects, and in their hands it has degenerated into a tedious and uniform monotony. Their Sultan Mahomet, as liberal as enlightened, would willingly have retained the Muses at his Court, but terrified with his frightful caresses, they shrunk like the sensitive plant from his rude embraces.—Learning and Letters saw a long list of evils they had to suffer, and the

staves

staves of the Janissaries at last drove them out of their original and happy country. In a word, Greece ceased to be the seat of arts and sciences, the moment the arts and sciences were no longer honoured. Local attachments and habitude fastened down a few learned men to their native soil, but they languished unknown and unregarded, and grew old amidst the general contempt. Others with more wisdom chose to wander in quest of new settlements, and Italy afforded them an elegant retreat. Florence in particular received them in her beneficent bosom, and its master, the generous friend of letters, of merit, and of virtue, met his illustrious guests with open arms. To know, to cherish, and to scatter every blessing in his power on them was at once his study. To each of them he seemed to say:

Greek Refugees settle at Florence.

"Quisquis es amissos hinc jam obliviscere Graios
Noster eris.——"

Such favours and Cosmo's hereditary taste fixed the fugitives on the banks of the Arno, and Florence derived the most important advantages from the calamities of Greece. A crowd of well informed inhabitants imported with them their literary treasures, and the ancient manuscripts from which they had extracted many of their beauties. Since the days of Leo the Isaurian, Greece had produced some able scholars, and in the number, the first and second Psellus, and Photius the

subtle and ingenious eunuch, so famous for his learning, his breach with the church of Rome, and his misfortunes. Yet with the Ancients this latter group of learned men is not to be classed. Schools were soon established by these exiles, and the transition from ignorance and stupidity to emulation and enthusiasm was immediate and rapid. The electric flashes spread to a vast distance, the elasticity of genius recovered itself in every sense, and the remaining chains of barbarism were shaken.

Advantages to Literature, and the Arts and Sciences.

The first care of the fugitives was to communicate their language, not less estimable for its richness and harmony, than the science of which it was the repository. By the aid of the art of printing discovered in Holland, copies of the Greek and Latin manuscripts nearly effaced, full of Abbreviations, and difficult to decypher, were multiplied in beautiful characters, and even the most indifferent were desirous to understand what they contained. Grammar was the porch by which it was necessary to enter. Vocabularies and treatises on the subject were much wanted, and such ample and exact systems were soon composed, that nothing was left to be said in future, if the subject could have been exhausted.—Criticism, of great importance in the republic of letters, but too much undervalued at present, was then honoured and respected. It undertook to purge the text of the faults of the ancient copyists, to restore the injuries of time, and to explain by various commen-

taries

taries and paraphrases the sense and meaning of the mutilated or corrupted passages. An indefatigable enthusiasm ransacked every corner of antiquity, but some abuses followed. The hatred and contempt of ignorance were pushed into a contrary extreme, and produced a mass of crude and indigested knowledge; too great a value was attached to the simple signs of ideas, the living languages were sacrificed to the dead ones, and the memory was cultivated at the expence of every other faculty. If literary pride and pedantry however were attended with these unexpected and extraordinary effects, and learning appeared to stifle genius, the inconvenience was but transitory. The mind soon took a different turn and a freer course; the Ancients were examined for the models of sublimity and beauty; these models inspired a noble emulation; original works recalled to the remembrance the most masterly performances; science traversed seas and mountains; the modern languages sprung out of barbarism; the study of words gave way to the study of things; truth rose on the ruins of obsolete errors; philosophy enlightened letters, letters ornamented philosophy; and by insensible degrees we reached the station, that we occupy at present.

CHAP. II.

DANTE—Criticism on his Works—The two Cavalcanti —Ser. Brunetto—Petrarch—General Character of his Works—Laura de Sade—Observations on her Character and conduct—Fountain of Valclusa—Countess de la Suze—Petrarch's Italian Works—Petrarch's Latin Works—His Character—Cino, the Civilian of Pistoia —Boccacio—Criticism on his Works—Observations on his Prose—Boccacio's "Il Decamerone"—Extraordinary Conclusion of it—Ancient Florentine Historians—Malespini—Villani—Revival of the Greek Language in the West—Emanuel Chrysoloras—Bessarion—George of Trebisonde—Amyrutzes—Theodorus Gaza—Gemisthus Pletho—Disputes between the Greek Refugees—Death of Bessarion—Iohannes Lascaris—Iohannes Argyropylus—Demetrius Argyropylus—Declension of Greece, its Arts, and Letters—Comparison of the Greek and Latin Languages—Modern Greek Language.

DANTE

CHAP. II.

FROM the great Revolution, which has been briefly entered into, the resurrection of letters may be dated.— By a singular destiny, which shews how much the climate of Tuscany is favourable to genius, it had already produced some great writers: its three splendid constellations had appeared. Dante, Petrarch, and Boccacio have immortalized themselves by the force of their own abilities; or, if they owed any thing to other assistance, it could only have been derived from the Latin school. Strangers almost to the names of the ancient Grecian authors, they were ignorant of the purest sources of instruction, and unacquainted with works, which are stamped with the most beautiful impressions of nature, and will serve as models to every nation capable of elegance or sentiment.

Durante

CHAP. II.

Dante.

Durante Alighieri, in modern pronunciation Dante, had been dead half a century before the birth of Cosmo de' Medici. His principal work was formed on the most extraordinary plan, with three divisions, under the titles of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, and will continue for ever to be the first classic production of his country.— Alone and without an equal, he stretches forward at the head of all its writers, and the rich picture which he has left, mellowed by time still captivates the connoisseur. Its title of comedy may however demand a little explanation. The dramatic works of Chaussée, which fill the eyes with tears, are spurious children of the comic muse; but they have more wit and pleasantry than can be found in a poet of deep reflection, who writes from indignation, who never laughs, but often scowls, who scatters with profusion the gall and honey of Parnassus, and joins, by habit, the sublimity of Homer with the caustic severity of Juvenal. Dante, indeed, by his title of "Comedia," to which he added the epithet "divina," meant to indicate merely the nature of his poem, which was less epic than dramatic. In fact, it consists of conversations between the poet and his guide, evil spirits, angels, the damned, sinners in a state of purgatory, and the blessed. To the want of a correct taste his absurd and burlesque images are to be attributed; and in a work of such sublimity and such seriousness, the disparity is shocking. But genius is ever on the wing, and taste only creeps:

"—— Sequitur non passibus æquis,"

Even

Even Scarron would be puzzled to discover, in his most ludicrous compositions, an idea more peculiarly proper for them, than the punishment which the Italian poet has assigned to pretended sorcerers and prophets. From their profane desire of looking into futurity he has condemned them to a distorted shape, and has placed their faces over their shoulders. Tiresias, and the prophetess Manto (*a*), shed tears, which trickle down their backs, and their hair, by this poetical transfiguration, covers their breasts. Malebranche, Malacoda, Libicocco, Calcabrigna, and Scarmiglione Farfoletto, are as ridiculous as they are frightful (*b*). Satan himself is the character of all others the most horridly grotesque that ever occurred to the mind of man. This infernal being, of gigantic appearance, up to the middle in the ice of Styx, seems to be making violent and useless efforts to disengage himself, flapping with indignation his dirty leathern wings,

(*a*) "Mira, ch' ha fatto petto delle spalle:
Perchè, volle veder troppo davante
Dirietro guarda, e fa ritroso calle.
Vedi Tiresia ———.
. . . .
E quella, che ricuopre le mammelle
Che tu non vedi, con le trecce sciolte,
Manto fu ———".
Dante dell' Inferno, Cant. 20. 37—55.

(*b*) "Per l' argine sinistro volta dienno:
Ma prima avea ciascun la lingua stretta,
Co' denti, verso lor duca, per cenno,
Ed egli area del cul fatto trombetta."
Dante dell' Inferno, Cant. 21. 136—139.

CHAP. II.

wings, of an immense size; and, to complete the caricature, has three faces, one a livid yellow, another black, and the third of a scarlet colour. From six enflamed and blood-shot eyes fall streams of tears; three mouths pour forth torrents of blood, and in each he holds a hardened sinner. Judas occupies the post of honour in the centre, and to his astonishment discovers Brutus and Cassius (*c*) in the other two. Could Dante have been ignorant

(*c*) "Lo 'mperador del doloroso regno
Da mezzo 'l petto uscía fuor della ghiaccia:
E più con un gigante i' mi convegno,
Che i giganti non fan con le sue braccia:
Vedi oggimai, quant' esser dee quel tutto,
Ch' a così fatta parte si confaccia.
S' ei fu sì bel, com' egli è ora brutto,
E contra 'l suo fattore alzò le ciglia:
Ben dee da lui procedere ogni lutto.
O quanto parve a me gran meraviglia,
Quando vidi tre facce alla sua testa!
L' una dinanzi, e quella era vermiglia:
L' altre eran due, che s' aggiungéno a questa,
Sovr' esso 'l mezzo di ciascuna spalla,
E si giungéno al luogo della cresta:
E la destra parea tra bianca e gialla:
La sinistra a vedere era tal, quali
Vengon di là, ove 'l Nilo s' avvalla.
Sotto ciascuna uscivan duo grand' ali,
Quanto si conveniva a tant' uccello:
Vele di mar non vid' io mai cotali.
Non avén penne, ma di vispistrello
Era lor modo: e quelle svolazzava,
Sì che tre venti si movén da ello.
Quindi Cocito tutto s' aggelava:
Con sei occhi piangeva, e per tre menti
Gocciava 'l pianto, e sanguinosa bava,

ignorant of the established opinions in the Grecian and Roman republics, that the assassin of the tyrant who had usurped the sovereignty of his country was entitled to its gratitude? Could he be ignorant, that six hundred years after the fall of Hipparchus, the Athenians celebrated the festival of his murtherers, and in commemoration sung:

> " Εν (*d*) μυρτȣ κλαδι το ξιφος φορησω,
> ὥσπερ Αρμοδιος κ' Αριστογειτων,
> ὅτε τον τυραννον κτανετην,
> ισονομȣς τ' Αθηνας εποιησατην.
>
> Φιλταθ'

Da ogni bocca dirompea, co' denti,
Un peccatore a guisa di maciulla,
Sì che tre ne facea così dolenti.
A quel dinanzi il mordere era nulla,
Verso 'l graffiar, che tal volta la schiena
Rimanea della pelle tutta brulla.
Quell' anima lassù ch' ha maggior pena,
Disse 'l maestro, è Giuda Scariotto,
Che 'l capo ha dentro, e fuor le gambe mena.
De gli altri duo, ch' hanno 'l capo di sotto,
Quei che pende dal nero ceffo, è Bruto:
Vedi, come si storce, e non fa motto:
E l' altro è Cassio, che par sì membruto."

Dante dell' Inferno, Cant. 34. 28—67.

(*d*) *Analecta Græca. Brunk. vol.* 1. 155. *Argent.* 8*vo.* 1772.

" Twin'd in a myrtle-wreath I'll rear my sword,
Like the twin partners in their country's cause,
When on the tyrant's head their rage they pour'd
For freedom, liberty, and equal laws.
Brothers! ye are not dead,
But in the regions of the blest,
With Peleus Son, and Diomed,
Enjoy eternal rest!

Φιλταθ' Αρμοδι, ου τι πω τεθνηκας·
νησοις δ' εν μακαρων σε φασιν ειναι,
ἱνα περ ποδωκης Αχιλευς,
Τυδειδην τε φασιν Διομηδεα.
Εν μυρτου κλαδι το ξιφος φορησω,
ὥσπερ Αρμοδιος κ' Αριστογειτων,
ὅτ' Αθηναιης εν θυσιαις
ανδρα τυραννον Ιππαρχον εκαινετην.
Αει σφων κλεος εσσεται κατ' αιαν,
φιλταθ' Αρμοδιε κ' Αριστογειτον,
ὅτι τον τυραννον κτανετον
ισονομους τ' Αθηνας εποιησατον."——

If this circumstance of Grecian history was unknown to Dante, could he have been ignorant, that at Rome after the expulsion of her kings, the law of Tyrannicide was express and clear; that the action, which from its atrocity could never be approved, and ought by every honest man to be detested, an overpowering patriotism had considered as divine; that the memories of Brutus and Cassius had been long dear to their country; and that they had been unanimously reckoned to have been heroes,

---

Around my sword a myrtle-wreath I'll twine,
Like the brave youths, the chos'n Patriot band,
Who slew Hipparchus at Minerva's shrine,
And broke the fetters of their native land.
Brothers! In Heav'n shall dwell
The record of the glorious deed;
By you the haughty tyrant fell,
By you was Athens freed!"

heroes, the first of men, and the last of the Romans? The greatest absurdities are, however, sometimes the offspring of the sublimest talents, which have alone the privilege of committing them with impunity.—A great genius can only wander into extravagance, an inferior one never ventures to such a distance.—Notwithstanding Dante's egregious foibles he soon recovers his sublime situation, and by his thunder awakens his readers, that his absurd ideas or scholastic metaphysics had lulled with indifference to sleep. Like a vessel in a stormy ocean, at one moment he scales the heavens, in another he is buried in the waves beneath, till on the tenth (*e*) succeeding one he mounts yet higher than he did before. On whatever part of the poem the eye is thrown by accident, it meets immediately with passages, that vie in beauty with the most finished productions of Greece and Rome. Paradise itself, the most feeble division of the work, sparkles with gems inferior but in number to those in Hell and Purgatory. Here indeed his warmest admirers will find some languid intervals, his vivid fire barely glitters, and his genius appears to be extinguished.

" ——Cre-

(*e*) " Qui venit hic fluctus, fluctus supereminet omnes,
Posterior nono est, undecimoque prior."
Ovid. Trist. lib. 1. *Eleg.* 2. 49.

"——Credas penitus migrasse camœnas,
Notaque nunquam ipsum rediturum in pectora Phœbum (*f*)."

Tedious and insipid allegories also frequently return, but, what spreads a mortal chill over this part of the poem, is an improper abuse of many metaphorical passages from scripture. The spiritual happiness of heaven is described in such a manner as either to make no impression whatever on the mind, or one that is obscure, indecisive, and unintelligible. Its joys are such as are inconceivable, and inapplicable to the human soul hereafter, as well as in its present state. Sometimes we are "Stars, but babbling speaking stars, which shine with "less or greater glory, turning on themselves with rapi-"dity; which are absorbed in the sun; which issue out "of it again; and which dance to the harmony of the "spheres." At others, we are told of "Sarah, Rebec-"ca, St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, Comestor, Bo-"naventure, and the Abbè Ioachim clothed in white "robes, sitting upon benches, and chanting hosannahs "without end."

The superb ear of the two Tuscan orators would disgrace even the most vulgar language, against which Dante is not enough upon his guard. A mean senti-ment

(*f*) *Vidæ Poet. lib.* 2. 417.

ment clothed in graceful language is more easily overlooked than a brilliant one when vulgarly expressed. Yet for Dante much is to be said. The great artist could not find an instrument ready for his use. The Italian idiom was then poor and abject, and he is justly reckoned the creator of the language; or, if this is too warm an elogium, he certainly drew it from the dust, in which it scarcely crawled. They who have studied it, and who are acquainted with its miserable state, will see with pleasure how he has forced it forwards; how, instead of bending to it, he has led it captive, raised it to the height of his own ideas, and enriched it with a manly vigour from the force of his own conceptions.— Force of language is to be found only with a force of conception, and no mortal ever exceeded Dante in it (*g*). Not only his own towering imagination inspired him with a grandeur of expression, but also the singular absurdity of his subject. Ariosto and Tasso have both borrowed many of his verses, which are not to be distinguished like those which Virgil has adopted from Ennius and Pacuvius, by their rust, but by an air of majesty, of uncultivated nature in her greatest exertions, which is peculiar to him. All the succeeding Italian versifiers are his disciples, and they may be truly styled,

" —— la

(*g*) " Dante s'innalzò al sommo del esprimere, e alla maggior vivezza, perchè più largamente e più profondamente d' ogn' altro nella nostra lingua concepiva, essendo la locuzione imagine dell' intelligenza da cui il favellare trae la forza e il calore." *Gravina, della Rag. Poet. L. 2.*

"——— la bella scuola
Di quel signor dell' altissimo canto,
Che sovra gli altri, com' aquila, vola (*h*)."

In one of his letters he boasts that rhyme had never fettered him; but he forgets to acknowledge, that he often changed the received sense of the words he used, and that, like Homer, he laid every dialect under contribution his language would admit.—It is a bold assertion, and the fact is scarcely credible. Rhyme is so fierce a tyrant, that a great poet, manacled with its yoke, is an imprisoned eagle, which fastens with its beak upon the bars of its iron cage, whilst it fixes its steady eye upon the sun.

An ancient Florentine historian (*i*) reports that Dante was interred at Padua, the place of his exile, with great honour, and in the habit of a poet: "A grande honore e in habito di poeta;" but he has not given us a description of the dress. Amongst the multitude of the Jesuit Harduin's Paradoxes, which he attempted to establish with an insolence to be matched only by their extravagance, he has questioned the authenticity of the "Divina Commedia." Notwithstanding the reality of its author is a fact as well founded as it is possible to be, he supposed it

(*h*) *Dante dell' Inferno, Cant.* 4. 94.

(*i*) "Villani."

it to have been a forgery of the early part of the fifteenth century. The cotemporaries of the true Alighieri, he observes, commended his person, without saying any thing of his poem; and when others have mentioned it, he concludes, they were imposed upon themselves, and have also imposed upon us. In short he considers it as a personal invective against the Roman Pontiff by one of Wickliffe's disciples. His most triumphant argument arises from the circumstance of the Ancients, in the revelations, being crowned with fleurs de lys, when those flowers were only inserted in the crown of France in the reign of Philip de Valois. To refute arguments so weak and feeble, would be to waste time, and insult the understanding.

Let us keep in mind the age in which Dante lived, and we shall run little risk of undervaluing his talents, or doing injustice to his merit. There are indeed before him Italian versifiers, but what poets? Incoherent, confused, and such as he could neither have stooped to copy, nor to imitate. Yet he speaks himself of two Tuscan poetical authors, Guito Bonati of Arezzo and Guido Guinicelli (*a*), who had some ingenuity, enjoyed some reputation

(*a*) " O vana gloria dell' humane posse,
Com' poco verde in su la cima dura,
Se non è giunta dall' etati grosse!

CHAP. II.

reputation in their own times, and had babbled in rhyme. The first applied himself to sonnets, a kind of poetry introduced from Provence, which has often changed its structure, and its form.—Some verses of the celebrated Farinata Uberti, the chief of the Ghibeline faction at Florence, are also yet remaining, some of Dante Majano, and of a few others.

The two Cavalcanti.

The two Cavalcanti deserve rather more attention. The father belongs to the thirteenth century, and being both a philosopher and a poet, he was a voluminous writer in prose, and also in very free verse. Father Negri says: "By the grace of God we have nothing left of him." (*b*). Dante has placed him in that part of hell, where the Emperor Frederic II. and Farinata Uberti, with other heretics and unbelievers, are stretched in burning tombs.—Shade of immortal Dante, if hell gapes for those who only err, what mortal shall escape?—The true Christian is the honest conscientious man, the unbelievers and the heretics are the wicked!

The

Credette Cimabue nella pintura
  Tener lo campo: ed ora ha Giotto il grido,
  Sì che la fama di colui oscura.
Così ha tolto l' uno all' altro Guido,
  La gloria della lingua: e forse è nato
  Chi luno e l' altro caccerà di nido."
Dante, del Purgatorio, Cant. 11. 91—99.

(*b*) "Per divina providenza nulla c' è rimasto del suo."

The younger Cavalcanti far outstripped his father. The admirers of ancient Italian poetry still read with pleasure his Canzoni, on the subject of terrestrial love, which have served as the text for many commentaries. As the hero of one of Boccacio's novels he figures in the Decameron, and is described as one of the best logicians and natural philosophers in the world, but tainted with the maxims of Epicurus, and desirous of proving, if such a thing were possible, the non-existence of the Deity (*c*).

They who are acquainted with German literature are certainly no strangers to the Messiah of Klopstock. In this epic poem he has chastised with uncommon force the madness of Atheism. Hell is the scene of action, and the evil spirits are his instruments. "Satan saw and "heard them coming: he starts up in wild transport, and "casting his eyes over them beholds the Atheists, a mean "grovelling band, among whom was Gog, their horrid "leader, above all in phrenzy, and in power pre-emi- "nent. They endeavoured to imagine that what they "saw in Heaven was all a dream, the idle produce of "phantastic

(c) Egli fù un de migliori loici, che havesse il mondo, e ottimo philosopho naturale. Egli alquanto tenea della opinione degli Epicuri, e si diceva tralla gente volgare, che le sue speculationi erano solo in cercare, se trovarsi potesse, che Iddio non fosse."——Brunelleschi a "sottile e intendente Cavaliere," once asked him "Guido quando tu havrai trovato chi Iddio non sia, che havrai fatto?"—Destroy, if it were possible, the belief of Providence, and there is an end both of every happiness in this life and the hopes of every happiness hereafter!

CHAP. II.

"phantastic visions; and, lost in a labyrinth of opinion, "persuade themselves that the great Jehovah, first their "father and then their judge, has no existence. Satan "beheld them with a contemptuous smile (*d*)."

General opinion has supposed that in the time of these two Florentine poets, superstition, and a blind credulity in monks and friars, had totally disfigured Christianity; yet the rule has its exceptions. The fierce and free spirits of the age were then in a state of fermentation, and in Tuscany that fermentation was excessive.—One of the ancient historians of Florence has lamented the irritation: "In the year of Christ 1117," he says, "the Florentines "suffered grievous calamities, which were believed to be "the just judgments of God, as the citizens were greatly "infected with heresy, and particularly with the tenets of "the Epicureans. The heretics were indeed so nume- "rous that there were battles in the streets for the Faith, "and these cursed sects subsisted till the time of St. Do- "minic and St. Francis, the Fathers and Protectors of our "Holy Religion, who had a commission from the Pope "to punish heresy, and extirpated it in a great manner in "Tuscany (*e*)."

Of

(*d*) *Klopstock's Messiah, book* 2. *vol.* 2. 71–72.—Having not the happiness of being able to read German, I have been obliged to have recourse to a translation, and I fear the spirit of the original has evaporated.

(*e*) "Negli anni di Christo 1117 et seguenti ebbono i Fiorentini grande avversità, e credisi, chè cio fosse per giudicio di Dio, perocchè i cittadini eran molto corotti

Of Cavalcanti enough has perhaps been already said, but a sublime passage in the "Inferno" should not be forgotten, as it furnishes, with great art, the reason why the younger Cavalcanti did not reach Dante's glory.

"Allor (*f*) surse alla vista scoperchiata,
Un' ombra lungo questa, infino al mento:
Credo, che s'era inginocchion levata.
D' intorno mi guardò, come talento,
Avesse di veder, s'altri era meco:
Ma, poi che 'l sospicciar fu tutto spento;

Pian-

---

di eresia, intra gli altri della setta degli Epicurj: —— ed erano si grande parte gli eretici, che quasi intra più de' cittadini se ne combatteano insieme con armi, per la fede in più parti della città, e queste maladette sette durarono in Firenze molto tempo insino alla venuta di San Francesco e di San Domenico, edificatori e padri delle loro santi religioni: nelle quali furono santi frati a' quali fù commiso l' uficio dell' eretica pravità, per lo papa, e molto sturbarono le resie in Toscana, &c. &c."

Ricord. Malespini.

And Villani gives a similar account: "La citta era in que tempi molto corrotta di heresia, et infra le altre era della heresia delli epicurii, per vitio di lussuria et di gola et era di cio si divisa et partita la gente della citta, che con armata mano difendeano la detta heresia, contro à buoni et catholici christiani, et duro' questa maledittione et heresia infino al tempo di San Francesco, et di San Domenico, i quali edificorono nel nome d' Iddio sante religioni, nelle quali divenero molti santi frati. A quali fu commesso l' ufficio della heresia per lo papa, onde poi i detti inquisitori, molto li stirparono della citta di Firenze et di Milano et di piu altre terre di Toscana et di Lombardia, che di quella heresia erano maculati, et molto ne fu grande stirpatore, il valente San Piero martire del ordine di San Domenico, il quale essendo inquisitore, d' alcuno paterino fu morto con coltello." *Historie Universali de suoi tempi di Giovan. Villani*, 83. 24. *Venet.* 1559.

(*f*) *Dante dell' Inferno, Cant.* 10. 52—73.

"———————— another shade appear'd,
High o'er the flaming verge his front he rear'd,
While in his sparkling eye impatience burn'd,

Piangendo disse; se per questo cieco,
  Carcere vai, per altezza d' ingegno,
  Mio figlio, ov' è, e perchè non è teco?
Et io a lui; Da me stesso non vegno:
  COLUI CH' ATTENDE LA, PER QUI MI MENA,
  FORSE CUI GUIDO VOSTRO EBBE A DISDEGNO (g).
Le sue parole, e'l modo della pena,
  M' avevan di costui già letto il nome:
  Però fu la risposta così piena.
Di subito drizzato gridò; Come
  Dicesti, Egli ebbe? non viv' egli ancora?
  Non fiere gli occhi suo lo dolce lome?
Quando s' accorse d' alcuna dimora,
  Ch' i' faceva i alladinanz risposta,
  Supin ricadde; e più non parve fuora."

The

Eager he look'd along the burning shore,
And disappointment blanch'd his visage o'er:
  Oh! Alighieri! Oh, my friend! he 'cryd,
If to thy daring soul this dismal path
Spontaneous opens thro' the vale of death,
  Why has my Guido left thy faithful side?
AN HAND conducts me thro' the realms of pain
He cry'd, WHICH HAPLY GUIDO WOULD DISDAIN;
  For by his voice the spectre soon was known:
Say, feels he still the sun's benignant beam
Again, he cry'd, or here in hell's extreme,
  Sends from afar the never-dying groan?
Suspense awhile he waited my reply,
Then sunk, despairing, with a feeble cry."

Boyd's Dante, vol. 1. 329-330.

(g) Dante's obligation to the Latin poet he had himself acknowledged:

"Tu se' lo mio maestro, e 'l mio autore:
  Tu se' solo colui, da cu' io tolsi
  Lo bello stile, che m' ha fatto onore."

Dante dell' Inferno, Cant. 1. 85—88.

The majesty of Dante would not be easily preserved by a translation into almost any modern verse (*h*); yet Monsr. Ducis, in his tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, has imitated with wonderful success the Italian poet's horrible episode of Count Ugolino (*i*) and his children, so well known, and so much celebrated:

"———— j' écoute et j' entens de la tour,
La porte en mur epais se changer sans retour.
Je fixai mes enfans sans parole et sans larmes,
J' etais mort—ils pleuraient, je cachai mes allarmes,
Mais lorsqu' enfin (soleil devais-tu te montrer!)
Dans eux tous à la fois je me vis expirer,
Je devorai ces mains—Renaud me dit, mon pere
Vis, tu nous vengeras—Raimond, Dolcé, Severe,
M' offrirent à genoux leur sang pour me nourrir,
Et chacun d' eux ensuite acheva de mourir,
. . . .
Je restai seul vivant, mais indigné de vivre;
Ma vûe en s' egarant s' eteignit à la fin,
Et ne pouvant mourir de douleur ni de faim,

Je

(*h*) I admit the difficulty of translating Dante, yet there are two Poets of our own country who are eminently qualified for such an undertaking. One has already given the public three Cantos of the Inferno, in Dante's own manner, and the other has favoured the world with some exquisite versions of Italian Poetry, in his valuable History of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.

(*i*) Exclusive of Mr. Boyd's translation in the course of his work, this pathetic story has been attempted in blank verse by Mr. Richardson, (*Richardson's works*, 84, 4*to.* 1792), and by a noble Lord in rhyme.—I am pleased with the former, and I admire the latter.

CHAP. II.

Je cherchai mes enfans avec des cris funebres,
Pleurant, rampant, heurlant, embrassant les tenebres,
Et les retrouvant tous dans ce cercueil affreux,
Immobile et muet je m' etendis sur eux," &c.

The Latin Poems and "Lou cantar Provensales," or Provencale Ballads, had been Dante's real model, and in gratitude he has placed in Purgatory one of the most famous Troubadors. Who are you? demands the Poet from a shade; and in his native jargon the shade replies, "Jeu suis Arnault che plor e vai cantan (*k*)."

Ser. Brunetto. Ser. Brunetto, a Florentine, the secretary or chancellor of the city, and Dante's preceptor hath left us a work so little read, that both the subject of it and the language have been mistaken. It is in the French spoken in the reign of St. Louis, with the title of "Tresor," and contains a species of a philosophical course of lectures, divided into theory and practice; or, as he expresses it, "Un enchaussement des choses divines et humaines." He treats in it of Providence, the world, geography, history sacred and profane, the properties of nature, the elements, metals, plants, stones, animals, waters, the rain-bow, falling stars, comets, the winds, storms and whirl-

(*k*) "Tan m'abbelis vostre cortois deman,
Chi eu non puous, ne veuil a vos cobrire,
J'eu suis Arnault, che plor e vai cantan."
Dante del Purgatorio, Cant. 26. 140—143.

whirlwinds, of morality and politics. The work is in the form of an Encyclopedia, and he seems to have borrowed the design from Pliny (*a*). These two writers had formed the vast and difficult project of reducing the History of the Human Understanding, and of Arts and Sciences into a single treatise; but it may be easily imagined their intention was only the same, and that the execution was very different. The Roman Prætor has transmitted to us all the precious remains of antiquity, whilst the Florentine Secretary, celebrated in his day, and now forgotten, furnishes only a few curious facts, and those but thinly scattered. Yet there is a passage relating to the magnetic needle, which serves to rectify the annals of the compass, and proves to demonstration, that its virtues were known in navigation forty years before 1300 (*b*), when Musschenbroeck, and most of

(*a*) "Jam omnia attingenda, quæ Græci τας Εγκυκλοπαιδειας vocant."
Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. 1. 6. *tom.* 1. 4*to.* 1685.

A more particular account of Brunetto's Tresor may be found in the *Hist. de l' Academie des Inscriptions, &c. tom.* 7. 296. and *Warton's History of English Poetry, vol.* 2. 116. *vol.* 3. 237.

(*b*) "Les gens qui sont en Europe najent-ils à tramontaine devers Septentrion, et les autres najent à celle de Midy, et que ce soit la vérité, prenés une pierre d' iamant, ce est calamite, vous trouverés qu' elle a deux faces, l' une gist vers une tramontaine, et l' autre gist vers l' autre, et chacune des faces allie l' aguille vers celle tramontaine vers qui cette face gisoit, et pour ce seroint les mariniers deceus, se ils ne preissent garde."——Monsr. Tenhoven observes there is an error in the above passage, but that it proves, notwithstanding, the magnetic needle was in use forty years before 1300.

CHAP. II.

of the modern philosophers have dated its discovery. Brunetto appears to speak of it as a matter in general use rather than a new invention.—For a few such morsels, however, of useful information, we are obliged to wade through an ocean of absurdities, and to submit to the repetition of a thousand popular errors of the middle age. But what more is to be expected from the Encyclopedia of the fifteenth century? The time will come when Diderot and D' Alembert shall be in as little estimation as the "Tresor" of Brunetto, and

"Such as Chaucer is shall Dryden be."

It may be difficult to reconcile Brunetto's situation in Dante's imaginary world, with the great poet's respect, and veneration for his memory.

"Fu' (c) conosciuto da un, che mi prese
Per lo lembo, e gridò: Qual maraviglia?
. . . .
Ed io . . . .
Ficcai gli occhi, per lo cotto aspetto,
. . . .
. . . .
E chinando la mano alla sua faccia
Risposi, Siete voi qui, ser Brunetto?
. . . .
. . . .

Se

(c) *Dante dell' Inferno, Canto* 15. 24—122.

Se fosse pieno tutto 'l mio dimando,
· · · · · · voi non sareste ancora
Dell' umana natura posto in bando:
Che in la mente m' è fitta, ed or m' accuora
La cara buona imagine paterna
Di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora
Mi 'nsegnavate, come l'uom s' eterna;
E quant' io l' abbo in grado; mentr' io vivo,
Convien, che nella mia lingua si scerna.
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · e 'l sermone
Più lungo esser non può · · · · · · · ·
Sieti raccomandato 'l mio Tesoro,
Nel quale i' vivo ancora; e più non cheggio:
Poi si rivolse (*d*) · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ."

Petrarch

(*d*) "Keen as the guiding steel the artist views,
Their eager eyes my mortal form peruse:
When straight a voice exclaiming from the croud
Was heard; and soon a strong arresting hand
Seiz'd me alarm'd;—and "Oh! what strange command
Hath sent thee here?" the phantom cry'd aloud.

Soon disengaging from the foul embrace,
I strove his horrid lineaments to trace
With sulph'rous blast ensear'd, and thunders scar,
And soon Brunetti's ruin'd form I found,
Tho' deep conceal'd beneath the fiery wound,
"Ah! who, I cry'd, that honour'd form could mar?"

The ruin'd man reply'd, "if ever dear
You held Latini's name, vouchsafe to hear
His piteous tale, and let your guide retire."
"Approach," I cry'd, "within this calm retreat
(If he allows) and take thy shady seat
Far from the tempest of descending fire."

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Petrarch.

Petrarch was also a native of Florence, and is considered as the second constellation in the Tuscan hemisphere. His admirers and the honours they have bestowed on him have been numerous, and their adoration of him would have been very rational, if it had been within any bounds.—He was the first author, that gave to Itali-

an

"Alas! in vain thy friendly wish," he cry'd,
"Repose even for a moment is deny'd!
The sentenc'd soul for ever fleets around.—
—Who dares the rig'rous mandate to despise,
In chains twice fifty STYGIAN summers lies,
Struggling in vain to shift his burning ground."

"If ceaseless pray'r could make th' avenger mild,
Thou shouldst not wander thus, a soul exil'd,"
Sad I rejoin'd! "For yet my heart retains,
And ever shall retain, in sacred store
The treasures of thy soul-ennobling lore,
While life's warm current fills thy pupil's veins."

Nor till my grateful heart forgets to heave
Will this unwearied tongue the subject leave:
And, tho' disasters cloud my days to come,
Let her whose voice dispell'd my gloomy care,
Who led me thro' the caverns of despair,
Dispense with sov'reign hand her poet's doom.

"LOVE MY REMAINS," he cry'd, and fled forlorn,
In a cross whirlwind o'er the desert borne.

Boyd's Dante, vol. 2. 43—52.

Taking our leave of Dante, a few short extracts from Mr. Hayley may not be unacceptable to the reader:—"Dante Alighieri was born at Florence in May, 1265, of an ancient and honourable family. In the early part of his life he gained some credit in a military character, distinguishing himself by his bravery in an action where the Florentines obtained a signal victory over the citizens of Arezzo. He became still more eminent by the acquisition of civil honours, and at the age of thirty-five he rose to be one of the chief magistrates of Florence, where that dignity was conferred by the suffrages of the people. From this exaltation the poet

an poetry a rich and inimitable harmony, and the elegance and softness of his numbers are universally acknowledged. He added a fourth Grace, Modesty. In all his works there is not a single instance, which can give the least alarm to chastity, and the judicious author of an ecclesiastical history (*e*) has been either inattentive to Petrarch's merit, or is outrageous in the cause of prudery, when he supposes him dangerous to virtue. In contradiction to the authority of twenty such historians, a tender and honest sensibility of heart can never be considered

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himself dated his principal misfortunes. Italy was at that time distracted by the contending factions of the Ghibelines and Guelphs, and the latter, among whom Dante took an active part, were again divided into the Blacks and Whites.—In one of the proscriptions, Dante was exiled, and his possessions were confiscated.—Death terminated his exile on the 14th of September, 1321.—In 1483, Bernardo Bembo, the father of the celebrated Cardinal, raised a handsome monument over his neglected ashes, with the following inscription:

"Exigua tumuli Danthes hic sorte jacebas
Squallenti nulli cognita pænè situ;
At nunc marmoreo subnixus conderis arcu,
Omnibus et cultu splendidiore nites:
Nimirum Bembus, Musis incensus Etruscis,
Hoc tibi, quem in primis hæ coluere, dedit."

The person and manners of Dante are described by Boccacio. "Fu adunque questo nostro Poeta di Mezzana statura; e poichè alla matura età fu pervenuto, andò alquanto gravetto, ed era il suo andar grave, e mansueto, di onestissimi panni sempre vestito, in quello abito, che era alla sua matura età convenevole; il suo volto fu longo, il naso aquilino, gli occhi anzi grossi, che piccioli, le mascelle grandi, e dal labbro di sotto, era quel di sopra avanzato; il colore era bruno, i capelli, e la barba spessi neri e crespi, e sempre nella faccia malinconico e pensoso—— Ne costumi publici e domestici mirabilmente fu composto e ordinato; più che niuno altro cortese e civile; nel cibo e del poto fu modestissimo."

Hayley's Works, vol. 4. 20—29. 120. *London,* 1788.

(*e*) *Fleury, Hist. Ecclesiast. tom.* xx. 57.

General character of his Works.

dered as one of the snares of sin; nor verses, traced with a virgin's pen, as destructive of morality.—Petrarch might perhaps be put with safety into any hands, if his thoughts had been more simple or natural, and his taste more correct; for, as was observed of Seneca, " Adoles-" centium indolem non tam juvant quæ bene dicta sunt, " quam inficiunt, quæ pessime (*f*)."—Yet this objection goes merely to his style.

Many of his critics have reproached him with monotony, and they have reason on their side. A metaphysical passion does not appear to be a proper subject for poetry, and Petrarch in all probability would have resembled the Ancients more, if he had loved like them, and borrowed their pencil to paint his mistress.

Lesbia, Delia, Cynthia, Corinna, Hypsipile, Glycera, and Nemesis, inconstant, avaricious, and libertine as they were, still interest us; whilst Petrarch's divine Laura makes but a feeble impression on the reader, who looks into her history.—Some persons have supposed her only an allegorical personage; an Iris in the clouds; to whom the poet has given a name in order to exercise his Muse. This great problem was long disputed, and after many treatises and various dissertations, the allegorical sense has generally prevailed, though what was intended

(*f*) *A. Gellius.—Noctes Alb. lib.* 12. c. 2. 550. 4*to. L. B.* 1706.

tended by it, even the advocates for this construction have not settled. One has imagined it to be the Christian religion; a second, poetry; a third, the soul; a fourth, philosophy; and others, penitence, virtue, and the Holy Virgin. The enigma afforded amusement to various scholars, and the famous Ælia Lælia Crispis (*g*) did not occasion more embarrassment to any Ædipus of the last century. Laura, however, existed in reality, her maiden name was Denoves, and she married Hugh de Sade, a gentleman of Avignon. Worn out with bringing into the world a very numerous family, she lost at an early hour her celebrated beauty, and died of the plague in 1348.—Petrarch only became acquainted with her, when an indissoluble knot had put a fatal bar to any nearer connection; and she inspired him with a passion both real, and in some measure, the most extraordinary. The emblematic object of her name, the object the most common and almost hourly before his eyes, affected him with the most lively and violent emotions. With a weakness, bordering on insanity, every laurel from the frivolous resemblance in the name appeared an image

Laura de Sade.

(*g*) " Ælia Lælia Crispis, nec vir, nec mulier, nec andogryna, nec puella, nec juvenis, nec anus, nec casta, nec meretrix, nec pudica, sed omnia, sublata neque fame, neque ferro, neque veneno, sed omnibus, nec cœlo, nec aquis, nec terris, sed ubique jacet; Lucius Agatho Priscius, nec maritus, nec amator, nec necessarius, neque mærens, neque gaudens, neque flens, hanc nec molem, nec pyramidem, nec sepulcrum, sed omnia, scit et nescit cui posuerit."

image of his Laura, and he scarcely ever saw it without those sighs, shiverings, and palpitations, that he experienced in the presence of his divine beauty.

Doubts have been entertained of the reality of Petrarch's passion, or at least, it has been suggested, that it has been much exaggerated. His idea that "He who "is deeply in love cannot easily describe it," has been cited in support of the opinion, but great passions are sometimes silent. If in one sense they rouse the mind, in another, they soften and render it weak and languid. Whilst they affect the nervous system in accelerating its action, in the end they cause a stupor, which deadens the imagination, and destroys its vivacity and vigour.

Observations on her character and conduct.

Infidels of another kind have not feared to doubt of Laura's rigour, of which the poet in her life complained so bitterly, and after her death remembered with satisfaction and with gratitude (*h*).—Contemplating their history without prejudice or partiality, we shall see Petrarch beloved by a virtuous woman, who conceals her attachment

(*h*) The author of the Secchia Rapita had a strange idea on the subject. "Io tengo, che Petrarca godesse de suoi amori comi i topi de speciali LECCANDO gli alberelli di fuori." (*Tassoni. Cons. Sonn.* 42.)—I am not willing it should escape through a translation.

ment for him, from the apprehension that his knowledge of it might be productive of ill consequences.—To preserve her honour, and to retain her lover, was what she wished.—By that little species of coquetry which dismisses a lover always without enjoyment though never in despair, a practice which is yet in vogue, and by the management of some little favours of no great moment, and some little cruelty, which gave no great concern, a woman of tenderness and sensibility amused for twenty years the greatest genius of the age, without a real speck upon her character.—The constancy of Petrarch is matter of astonishment, as his whole life appears to have been only one continued series of pets and quarrels. The ardour of his natural disposition, and the adust blood which circulated within his veins, as well as his own vivacity, are equally repugnant to his tedious metaphysical passion; though he consoled himself with less rigid mistresses, by whom he left two children. At the age of sixty he writes to a friend nearly in the following manner. "My health and constitution are good, and neither "age, nor business, nor abstinence, nor discipline has "been yet able to subdue my rebellious passions. As the "spring approaches I must be again under arms,

"Vere magis, quia vere redit ossibus;

"and even at present I am at war with myself. But Grace "is my resource, and through its assistance I trust I shall "succeed in mastering myself."

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Fountain of Valclusa.

To recollect Petrarch is to recollect the fountain of Valclusa, so celebrated, and of which there have been so many erroneous ideas. The world has weakly imagined, that Petrarch and Laura passed their days in love and oblivion of the universe, on the margin of its pellucid stream, under branches of myrtle filled with turtles, from whom they received lessons of love and constancy. The peasants still shew to the credulous traveller garrets which they say were once inhabited by Petrarch, and they assure him that Laura's house was opposite, and connected by a subterraneous passage now filled up with ruins. These are vulgar and foolish tales, without the least foundation.—Far from sharing or multiplying the beauties of this solitude, Madame de Sade never saw it in Petrarch's company; never did she animate and ornament with her living graces the wild and simple beauties of the place!—Petrarch also repeats in twenty different passages, that he had retired to this romantic desert for the purpose of flying from Avignon and from Laura.

Countess de la Suze.

It is the fate of Genius and Beauty to immortalize every thing connected with them.—Independent of Valclusa, the hermitage near Belford of the Countess de la Suze, one of the Graces of the Court of France, as beautiful as tender, has been consecrated to sensibility and love.—To this sequestered retreat, sheltered by a solitary rock, she came conducted by the elegiac Muse, and breathed

breathed in sighs, her passion, her misfortunes, and her melancholy.—This desert, where the grand-daughter of Coligny retired, where plaintive and alone she mingled her tears with the gurgling stream that trickled down; where she reflected with tenderness on the Count de Flamarin her lover; and where she relieved her throbbing heart by tears and verses, is still called with the stream that washes it the fountain de la Suze.

Petrarch's Italian works.

To return to Petrarch.—The collection of his Italian works contains sonnets, symphonies, canzoni, madrigals, and ballads (*a*). Of the madrigals delicacy forms the charm, which insipidity destroys.—The learned Menage, or rather his editor, says, "La Ballade à mon gout, est "un chose fade;" and those of Petrarch will not alter the opinion. In number happily they are few. The symphonies are in a vitiated taste, where the poet fetters himself with chains, and sacrifices sense to sound. Neither Greece nor Rome disgraced herself with such productions, and their harmonious language was never crippled with these trifling restrictions. Petrarch attached himself principally to his sonnnets and canzoni, and he excelled

(*a*) An Italian author has reckoned up, in a Latin treatise of the year 1332, the different species of this kind of poetry: "Rhitmorum vulgarium septem sunt genera: Sonnettus, ballata, cantio extensa, rotundellus, mandrialis, serventotius, motus confectus. Sonnetorum 16. sunt species."

Ant. a Tempo. Summa Artis Rhitmicæ.

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excelled in both. He there displays every elegance and harmony of which the language was susceptible. The sonnets amount to upwards of three hundred, and there is not one in which some ingenious thought, some beautiful sentiment, some flash of genius is not to be found. Unfortunately these little pieces lose their spirit and their beauty as they extend. Elegantly as they begin, the conclusion is often lame and faulty, and they are like the Queen of Saba (*b*), or like Sirens:

"——— turpiter atrum
Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne (*c*)."

The verses of Petrarch are the verses of a poet, his canzoni are the verses of a great poet (*d*). Of the whole collection the most distinguished is what he sent to the younger Stefano Colonna, and not, as has been idly told, to that sublime Fool of Rienzi, who attempted the restoration of the Roman Republic, and with a grain of folly

(*b*) Monsʳ. Tenhove.. gives the following anecdote of this royal personage :— "Benjamin de Tudela vous dira que l' Arabesse in question, admise dans la chambre d' audience de Salomon, la trouva paveé de glaces de miroir, qu' elle prit pour l' eau. La crainte qu' elle eut de mouiller ses Vetemens lui fit retrousser legerement sa jupe, et laisser voir un PIED DE PAON: sur quoi Salomon, 'Vous avez un joli visage, Madame, mais parbleu vous avez de vilains pieds.'"

(*c*) *Horatius de Arte Poetica*, 3. 4.

(*d*) "Tutte le rime e tutte le versi in generale di Petrar. lo fecero Poeta ma le Canzoni furono quelle che Poeta grande e famoso lo fecero."
Tassoni Consid. Canz.

folly less might have succeeded. The three Canzoni of "The Eyes" are also master-pieces. By the Italians they are styled the "Three Graces" and "The Divine," and they are never spoken of but with transport and with rapture.—These little odes, where genius and the heart seem to dispute which has the largest share, deserve our admiration; they include every thing the most tender and the most delicate that fell from Petrarch; they are the most galant of all his poetry, and the quintessence and elixir of love, though they have their faults.

Petrarch has perhaps never been well translated, and it may never happen to him. To understand him perfectly requires a long and intimate acquaintance with him.—His beauties are fruits that we must gather from the tree ourselves, to taste them in their highest flavour. —His sentiments and thoughts are a volatile perfume which escapes when attempted to be conveyed into another vial.—Notwithstanding his translators may have been of the first abilities, the lovely butterfly, in passing through their hands, has left a part of the powder of its wings, and the little that remains is deadened and has lost its gloss.

Voltaire hath indeed transfused the spirit of two of the Canzoni into his imitations of them, which equal the originals; and the French might be satisfied with seeing Petrarch in their language, if the whole were as happily executed

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executed as the specimen of one or two pieces by an anonymous writer (*e*).

One inconvenience has attended Petrarch, which he could not foresee nor prevent, and that is, an innumerable crowd of execrable imitators.—They are thick clouds of starlings rising from the ashes of the Phenix.—The limits within which Petrarch confined himself, who

(*e*) " Onde tolse amor l'oro, e di qual vena,
Per far due treccie bionde ? e' n quali spine,
Colse le rose, e'n qual piaghia le brine,
Tenere e fresche, e diè lor polso e lena ?
Onde le perle, in ch'ei frange ed affrena,
Dolci parole, honeste, e pellegrine ?
Onde tante bellezze, e si divine,
Di qual fronte più che'l ciel serena ?
Da quali angeli mosse, e di qual spera,
Quel celeste cantar, che mi disface,
Si che m' avanza homai da disfar poco.

Di qual sol nacque l' alma luce altera,
Di que' begli occhi, ond' i' ho guerra e pace,
Che mi cuocon'l cor in ghiaccio, e'n fuoco ? "

" Quelle veine assez riche et pure
A cedé son or à l' amour,
Pour en former la blonde Chevelure,
Qu'il tresse ou laisse aux vents agiter tour à tour ?
Sous quel ciel heureux sont ecloses,
Ces tendres fleurs, ces immortelles roses,
Dont il a composé son teint ?
Quelle plaine a reçu cette neige mobile,
Qui par un mouvement uniforme et tranquille,
Parait s'animer sur son sein

who had more delicacy than genius, they have prescribed to this species of poetry itself, and they have thought that their mistress, and their mistress only, was to be sung, and sung exactly in his manner. The same images were introduced, the same forms of expression used.—The eye was as luminous as the sun, the heart was a volcano, or "Monte Ghibello," but these trifles at last ceased to be in fashion (*f*).—Cold as the snow of Nova Zembla

Ou ce Dieu trouva-t'il pour orner son ouvrage,
Ces perles que sa main avec grace arrangea,
Et qu'en deux rangs egaux lui-meme il partagea,
 Pour s' ouvrir et preter passage
A cette voix si douce, à ce chant si flateur,
Dont les Esprits divins lui donnerent l' usage,
 Et qui retentit dans mon cœur ?
Le soleil s'est privé du rayon de lumiere,
 Qu'il voit sortir de ces beaux yeux,
Ces yeux dont un regard, ou paisible ou severe,
 Commande toujours à mes feux.
En deployant ainsi sa brillante parure
Sur ce front plus serein que la ciel d'un beau jour,
 Sans doute il faut que la nature
 Ait tout prodigué pour l'amour."

The English Reader will recollect two delicious versions by the late Sir William Jones, in which there are the richness, the elegance, the sweetness, and melody of the original.

(*f*) They have been well characterized in the following epigram :

"Vatibus hic mos est Italis, ut mille smaragdos
 Ut mille intexant versibus astra suis.
Nil præter flores, aurum, marmorque loquuntur
 Nil radios præter Lunave solve tuos.
Denique versiculis Tuscis omnia bella,
 Excipias ipsos si modo versiculos."

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Zembla is, it is not comparable to these copies of an original, whose greatest merits consist in purity, elegance, and grace. "Eat, Lord," said the Persian magicians to their Deity, when they threw into their sacred fire the incense, the myrrh, and the faggots, which were to feed the flames. The same compliment may be very properly bestowed on the immense mass of the Canzoni with which Italy has been pestered.—Petrarch, as he advanced in life, blushed at having been the author of so many Italian verses, which he calls "Nugellas vulgares," yet from these trifles he is indebted for his fame.

Petrarch's Latin works.

We have many of his Latin Poems, which are never read, and an Epic Poem with the title of "Africa," a tedious and prosaic relation of the second Punic war.—Silius Italicus has treated nearly the same subject, and Silius Italicus, who then slept in the dust of Swisserland, is Virgil in comparison of Petrarch.

Petrarch hath also made use of the Latin in many prose compositions, and he was both much attached to it, and considered it as his mother-tongue. He did not indeed foresee a long existence of the Tuscan idiom, in his opinion a bunch of straw, that is extinguished as easily as it is set on fire.—His Latinity was unequal and incorrect, or speaking more exactly, he had not any Latin style of his own. Every where the

"Membra disjecta"

are

are to be seen, a motley assemblage of phrases from Cicero and Seneca, and scraps from St. Augustin and his other favourites. Yet his treatise "De sui ipsius et "aliorum ignorantia" will repay the reader for his trouble.

His character.

If an idea is formed of Petrarch as a frivolous person, who passed his life at the feet of his mistress, his lyre in his hand and tears in his eyes, it will be an erroneous one. Neither love, nor poetry, nor even study, had so absorbed his faculties as to leave him no spare moments for more active duties. He was a statesman, an able negotiator, a profound politician, but his lyre and his love have alone immortalized him. It would be useless to repeat what all the world knows, his solemn coronation as a Poet in the Capitol, the form is notwithstanding curious, and resembles the pompous Bulls of many universities (*a*).

This

(*a*) The whole Bull or Patent would swell beyond the limits of a note, but the following is an authentic extract from the "PRIVILEGII LAUREÆ RECEPTÆ A FRANCISCO PETRARCHO EXEMPLAR."

"NOS URSUS COMES ET SENATOR præfatus pro nobis, et collega nostro, Coronam Lauream nostris manibus ejus capiti impressimus, dantes eidem tam in dicta arte poetica, quam in dicta historica arte, atque in omnibus spectantibus ad ejusdem auctoritatem Præfati Domini Regis S. P. Q. R. tam in hanc Sanctissimam Urbem (quam omnium Urbium et terrarum, caput esse non ambigitur et magistram) quam alibicunque locorum legendi, disputandi atque interpretandi veterum scripturas, et novas, à seipso omnibus sæculis auxiliante Deo, et MANSUROS LIBROS, ET POEMATA COMPONENDI, liberam tenore præsentium potestatem, nec non et ubi et

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This honour, which at present would be ridiculous, was then of great importance and in high estimation, and consequently it was the object of Petrarch's wishes. Experience convinced him of its vanity and folly, and he lived to think very sensibly on the subject. What perhaps displeased him more than the absurdity inseparable from "the permission of making by authority verses that should last for ever," was the necessity he was reduced to, of sharing the honour of the laurel with his countryman Zanobi de Strata, crowned by the emperor Charles the IVth in person, with those evergreens, which fluttered round his temples without bearing any fruit.—Zanobi had merit, though he is not to be ranked with Petrarch. Some of his works are in the public library of his native city, and amongst them a poem on the Sphere, which has never been thought worthy of being printed. Of such a rival Petrarch had no reason to be jealous, but he could not conceal his sentiments, and one of his correspondents appears to be fully aware of them (*b*). Flo-

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quotiens sibi placuerit, possit hujusmodi, atque alios actus poeticos Laurea, seu myrto, vel hedera, si id genus elegerit, ornare, et in actu atque habitu quolibet poetico, publicè et solemniter exercere." *Pieces Justificatives pour la Memoires de la Vie de Francois Petrarch. tom. 3. Amst.* 1767.

(*b*) "De Cæsaris imo barbari hujus novitate fantasmatis quid dicere velim in diem illum quem expecto reservare censui.——Quid enim ipse egerit et tu et orbis universus illacrumat. Mea quidem abominatio est quod——unum de nostris amentem fecit——Castaliæ fontem turbantem oblimantemque, ad coronæ fastidium non fastigium sublimando; ignarus quantum non tam tibi quam toti mundo fecit injuriam."

Florence treated Zanobi as one of her most honourable children, erected a mausoleum to him, and placed his statue in one of her principal gates.

Cino, the Civilian of Pistoia.

The great Civilian, Cino of Pistoia, was Petrarch's preceptor, who is supposed to have been the first person that excelled in modern lyric poetry.—One of those supple, accommodating spirits that take every impression, and whilst he dictated a grave commentary on the Digests, wrote tender and galant sonnets to Ricarda Selvaggi his mistress. A collection of the labours of his Muse has been printed at Rome and Venice, the Italians still read it with delight and join in opinion that Cino was the sweetest and most tender poet before Petrarch. That he was infinitely Petrarch's inferior they all agree.—Cino had two scholars in two different styles, who have done him great credit; Petrarch and Bartolo. The latter was his favourite, and when Petrarch quitted Themis for the Muses, he wrote to him a very lamentable and acrimonious epistle.

"In the space of four years you had acquired by "heart the whole body of the civil law, but abandoning "this glorious career, you have clipped those wings, "which would have taken the boldest flight that "any law student ever thought of.—It is the fickleness of "youth.—I once hoped to see you in a Professor's chair, "and at the head of the Tribunals, distributing like

"another Ulpian, law and justice; at present you are "rambling to the houses of princes with your lyre in "your hand, as a strolling musician, and collecting "round you a crowd of parasites and flatterers, of which "their palaces are full. Master Francis, I lament your "blindness, and I have often prayed the Lord to restore "you to your former mode of life, or to stifle in me eve-"ry remembrance of you.—I cannot think of you with-"out repenting I ever loved you so much. Return and "be yourself, or I never wish to hear again of a person "unworthy ever to have been under my tuition."

Boccacio.

The name of Boccacio is not less celebrated than that of Dante or Petrarch. Of the latter he was the disciple as well as legatee, and he inherited the famous "Robe de Chambre," which descended from genius to genius. Independent of Boccacio's Latin works, he had two powerful recommendations. No country can boast of a more agreeable and natural writer of fables, and he was the father of Italian prose, which was harsh and rough, and which he carried to the highest perfection.

"———et Pater et Rex
Hetruscæ Suadæ, primumque in furfure Sydus (*c*)."

It is a fact very remarkable yet very true, that prose has

(*c*) *Sectani Satyræ.*

has always arrived later at perfection than poetry, though poetry is apparently more difficult. Homer and Hesiod existed many Olympiads before Hellanicus and Herodotus. Lucretius died the day of Cicero's birth, the Cid appeared before the Provincial Letters, and without multiplying examples, the English Prose cotemporary with the Fairy Queen is insupportable.

Criticism on his Works.

Boccacio's verse is very feeble, and has one great fault, obscurity. To be understood, it must first submit to a singular process, and be reduced into prose. The experiment has been tried on the Theseid, which Bayle styles a poem of a "new invention (*d*)." But the Italian author (*e*) cited by Bayle does not say it was a poem of modern invention, and only observes that the texture of the verse was new. It was the first example of what the Italians call Ottava Rima, or stanza of eight verses, which has been since adopted by many succeeding poets, in preference to the Terze Rime of Dante, which had numerous admirers.

Observations on his Prose.

Boccacio had too correct a taste to be charmed with his

(*d*) "Notez que la Theseide de Boccace fut un Poeme d' une nouvelle invention; et c' est toujours un relief; car il n' appartient qu' aux grands esprits de tracer des routes inconnues auparavant." *Bayle. Dict. Hist. et Crit. tom.* 1. 576.

(*e*) "Scrisse la Theseïde opera in ottava rima, e fu il primo inventore di tale testura, perciocchè per innanzi non mi ricordo io haver trovato ch' altri la usasse." *Betussi Vita di Bocc.*

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his own verse. In despair of being ever able to reach his two predecessors, or even to follow them with credit, he turned his thoughts towards prose, and distinguished himself as much as he could have wished. An English author compares the Writer, who first applies himself to verse and afterwards descends to prose, as a galant, who pays his addresses to the mistress, and finishes his amorous career with the chamber-maid. Without analyzing this conceit, Boccacio's sentiments of his own poetry may be gathered from a passage in his works. "Non dubito, dum ætas in hoc aptior erat, si æquo genitor tulisset animo, quin inter celebres Poetas unus evasissem; verum dum in lucrosas artes primo inde in lucrosam facultatem ingenium flectere conarer meum, factum est, ut nec negotiator sim, nec evaderem canonista, et perderem poetam esse conspicuum (*f*)."

Boccacio's "Il Decamerone."

The Decameron, which the author by no means supposed would be the foundation of his glory, but rather as a lively piece of gaiety, is his only work by which he is now remembered. It has been surnamed by the Italians, in allusion to an expression of Dante, "The Prince Galeot," a name which they give to the officious ministers of love, as the French make use of the term Dariolette

(*f*) *Boccacio, Genealogia Deorum.*

riolette for their confidants, from Dariolet in the romance of Amadis of Goal (*g*).

Boccacio has been said to be Cleopatra's asp in a basket of flowers.

"Frigidus, O pueri, fugite hinc latet anguis in herbâ (*h*)."

"If we knew," says Vanozzi, "what mischief this "unfortunate book hath occasioned, we should throw it "into the flames without hesitation or concern." This is perhaps going too far.—Paulus Iovius, who was a bishop, speaks of it with delight, and his pastoral solicitude does not seem to be in the least alarm for the safety of his flock. "Obsolescunt," says the prelate, "et ægrè qui-"dem vitæ spiritum retinent Libri de Genealogiâ Deo-"rum, varietateque Fortunæ, et de Fontibus accuratè "potius quam feliciter elaborati, quando jam illæ decem "dierum Fabulæ, Milesiarum imitatione in gratiam "oblectandi otii, admirabili jucunditate compositæ, in "omnium nationum linguas adoptentur, et sine ulla "suspi-

(*g*) Scarron, in his Travesty of Virgil, has said of Dido's sister;

"Qu' en un cas de necessité
Elle eut ete Dariolette."

And old Regnier:—

"Le bel air de la Cour le dressant au poulet,
De vertueux qu' il fut le rend Dariolet."

(*h*) *Virgilii, Eclog.* 3—8.

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"suspicione interitûs, applaudente populo, cunctorum "operum gratiam antecedant (*i*)."

> "Hic meret æra liber sosiis, hic et mare transit,
> Et longum noto scriptori prorogat ævum (*k*)."

Milesia was a city of Ionia, the ancient cradle of philosophy and Grecian astronomy, the country of Thales, of Anaximenes, and of the Anaximanders, celebrated for its commerce, its opulence, by the number of its colonies, on the borders of the Propontis, the Tanais, and the Nile, and not less celebrated for the effeminacy of its inhabitants. In this province of Ionia, where the Meander winds through a most delicious country; where groves of myrtle, the almond, the sweet willow, and the orange, perfume the air; all nature inspires the most voluptuous sensations. Here the Milesian tales originated, and an Aristides distinguished himself in these compositions. According to Plutarch he must have written before Crassus, for after his defeat a copy of these fables was found in the baggage of a Roman officer (*l*). The Parthians

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(*i*) *Paulus Iovius.*

(*k*) *Horatius, de Arte Poetica*, 345, 346.

(*l*) "Την δε γερυσιαν των Σελευκεων αθροισας, εισηνεγκεν ακολαστα βιβλια των Αριστιδε Μιλησιακων· ουτε ταυτα γε καταψευσαμενος· ευρεθη γαρ εν τοις Ρυστιε σκευοφοροις· και παρεσχε τω Σουρηνα καθυβρισαι πολλα και κατασκωψαι τους Ρωμαιους, ει μηδε πολεμεντες απεχεσθαι πραγματων και γραμματων δυνανται τοιουτων."

Plutarchi, Vit. Crassi. 1029. *ed. Stephen.* 1572.

Parthians despised a nation that, in the midst of its military pursuits, could give up its hours to such amusements, and their contempt continued till the Muleteer Ventidius Bassus lowered their pride, and prepared the way for the fall of their empire under Severus.—In the eighteenth century similar recreations are not uncommon; but amongst the Romans, the Ancient Romans, the Great Romans, they are astonishing! Could we have imagined, from an acquaintance with their early history, they would have perfumed their helmets, their eagles, and victorious standards? It was not indeed in the days of their Consuls Curius Dentatus, Ursus Togatus, and Piso Frugi, but when some of their first Cæsars reigned. —Francesco Sachetto, and another Florentine, the author of the "Cento Novelle," had applied themselves to the same subject before Boccacio. Their success was trifling, whilst the Decameron has been so much read as to have passed through more than two hundred editions. If we consider this professor of gaiety and galantry in a moral sense, does he deserve the reproach of poisoning the public virtue? Such an opinion might be perhaps rather too severe, and yet the Decameron may be very dangerous to a young person of lively imagination. If Plato was to return to the earth, he might probably treat Boccacio as he is said to have treated Homer. He would not banish him from his republic, but after having perfumed him with the most delicious odours, and crowned

crowned him with garlands of flowers, he might conduct him to the city gates, and desire him to take his leave.

The Decameron has been corrected many times under different Popes, and re-printed with these alterations. The Literati of Italy have lamented that an author, who has always charmed them, should be mutilated, enervated, annihilated. Devotees and monks are still clamorous for additional depredations, and insist that, in its present form, it is yet pregnant with the most serious consequences. Some wish almost every thing to be pared off, others nothing.—The most moderate are of opinion that it is not susceptible of corrections, and that it ought to be printed as it fell from Boccacio's hands, or suppressed. Such an idea is nearly like the answer of Aquaviva Lainez, or some other General of the order of the Jesuits, on being requested to introduce some variations into the rules of the society, "Sint ut sunt, aut non "sint."

A book which uniformly breathes a spirit of levity and gaiety opens in a very melancholy manner, by a detailed history of the plague in 1348.—The critics have concluded such an introduction to be improper, and inconsistent with the rest of the work; but the great and happy effects of contrast in poetry and eloquence are well known, and objects from such positions rise more power-

powerfully before the mind. In this manner the ancient sculptors, when they meant to make the beauty of a Venus or a Grace more striking, contrasted it with the statue of a deformed and hideous Satyr; and in the Æneid and the Roland, to paint with greater force the tumultuous passion of the Queen of Carthage (*a*) and the French Hero, night has been chosen, which sheds it poppies on all the rest of nature. From an artifice of the same kind, Boccacio conducts his readers to an elegant pavilion, superbly illuminated, with every species of voluptuousness to regale the senses, across a forest of funereal cypress, where birds of prey and owls are screaming; and which is rendered still more dreadful from the darkness and the silence of the surrounding scenery.

Three first-rate writers have described the Plague, Thucydides (*b*), Boccacio (*c*), and Lord Clarendon.— Boccacio

(*a*) " Nox erat; et placidum carpebant fessa soporem
Corpora per terras, silvæque et sæva quierant,
Æquora; cum medio volvuntur sydera lapsu,
Cum tacet omnis ager: pecudes pictæque volucres,
Quæque lacus latè liquidos, quæque aspera dumis
Rura tenent, somno positæ sub nocte silenti,
Lenibant curas, et corda oblita laborum,
At non infelix animi Phœnissa," &c.

P. Virgil. Æneid. 4. 521—531.

(*b*) *Thucydides.—Hist. lib.* 2. 47, 48.—*Pag.* 127—132.

(*c*) *Il Decamerone di Boccaccio Giornata* 1. *p.* 3, 4, 5. *ed.* 4*to.* 1527.

Boccacio seems entitled to the preference.—The descriptions of it by Lucretius *(d)* and Virgil *(e)* are in verse, though taken from the Greek historian. The first of these Latin Poets has detailed with energy every symptom of the malady, but Virgil has made his description of it more affecting, and has the art of interesting us for the very animals which were its victims. Here he is superior to Lucretius, and Scaliger was so highly pleased with the passage, as to declare he should have preferred being the author of it to the patronage of the first monarch upon earth. Lowering the hyperbole, no verses can be more harmonious, more picturesque, or more tender.

Extraordinary conclusion of it.

From the conclusion of the Decameron we may learn that Boccacio had his doubts of the propriety of his licentious tales, and of the effects of such a collection of poltrooneries. His expressions are a strange mixture of pleasantry and candour.—" Good Ladies, amongst ye " some may perhaps think that in writing these novels I " have been a little too free and gay. If I was to plead " against ye, fair dames, I should lose my cause with " costs. I allow then that ye have pretensions to accuse " me, but first hear my reasons and excuses. A corrupt " mind will discover venom in the most innocent expres- " sions.

(d) *Lucretius de Rerum Natura, lib.* 6. 1090—1284.

(e) *P. Virgilii. Georg. lib.* 3. 478—566.

" sions. The sermon of the most religious cordelier " may give occasion to some levities, but a little joke " cannot ruin the honest and well disposed. A handful " of mud cannot speck the sun, nor ten or twelve gay " tales corrupt your souls. If ye prefer a Pater-noster, " and to prepare a treat for your spiritual Director, ye " are welcome. My novels will not run after ye to be " read. But ye will say such reading may lead us into " some indecent gaieties.—The evil is not great. Ye " have only to turn to the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the " History of the Martyrs, or the Tears of Mary Mag- " dalene, and all goes well again. The soul recovers its " natural bias.—Think as ye please, but it is time to " finish.—With my humble thanks to Him who hath " conducted me, after all my toils, into the wished-for " port, I recommend ye, fair dames, to his holy protec- " tion, but think sometimes of me (*f*)."

Such

(*f*) " Bellissime Donne, saranno peradventura alcune di voi, che diranno, che io habbia nella scriver queste novelle troppa licenzia usata ——— laqual cosa io nego, perciò che niuna si dishonesta n' è, che con honesti vocaboli dicendola si disdica ad alcuno. ——— Ma presuppogniamo, che cosí sia, che non intendo di piatir con voi, che mi vince reste, dico a rispondere, perchè io habbia cio fatto, assai ragioni vengon prontissime. ——— Niuna corrotta mente intese mai sanamente parola, e così come le honeste a quella non giovano, così quelle, che tanto honeste non sono, la ben disposta non posson contaminare, se non come il loto il solari raggí, o le terrene brutture le bellezze del cielo. ——— Chi ha addir paternostri, o adfare il migliaccio, o la torta al suo divoto, laseile stare, elle non correranno di dietro a niuna adfarsi leggere. ——— Tuttavia se troppo per questo ridessero, il lamento di Gieremia, la passione del Salvatore, e il rammarico della Maddalena ne le potrà agevolmente guarire. ——— E lasciando homai a ciascheduna, a dire e credere come le pare, tempo è da por fine alle parole, colui humilmente

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Such a conclusion is certainly extraordinary. In any other writer it would have been profane; in Boccacio it is ingenuous. His epitaph, written by himself, bears evident marks of the same hand.

"Mens sedet ante Deum, meritis ornata laborum (*g*)."

The "Fiametta" and Filocopo have no claim to be ranked with the Decameron, though dictated by love to please Mary of Sicily, sister of the famous Jane the First of Naples, who had such a singular amusement in marriage, divorce, and strangling her husbands.

Ancient Florentine Historians.

Exclusive of the men of genius and learning already mentioned, Florence had, a considerable time before the restoration of letters, historians of distinguished merit. Ricordano Malespini, one of the first amongst them, belongs to the thirteenth century, and bears a little of the rude impression of the age. Under the necessity of confining

Malespini.

ringraziando, che dopo si lunga fatica col suo ajuto n' ha al desiderato fine condotto. E voi piacevoli Donne con la sua gratia in pace virimanete, qualche volta ricordandovi hi Giov. Boccacio." *Il Decamerone di Boccacio. Conclusione dell' autore.*

I do not know from what edition of Boccacio Monsr. Tenhove extracted this quotation. It differs with my copy very materially.

(*g*) Boccacio was buried in the Church of St. Philip and Jacob at Certaldo, and the following is his epitaph, written by himself:

"Hac sub mole jacent Cineres ac ossa Iohannis
Mens sedet ante Deum, meritis ornata laborum
Mortalis vitæ. Genitor Boccacius illis
Patria Certaldum, studium fuit alma Poesis."

fining himself to fabulous traditions, his ideas are very confused respecting a number of events, with which we are at present familiarly acquainted. To convince us of the extreme degree of his ignorance, it will be only necessary to throw a glance over the heads of the different chapters of his Chronicle (*h*). Yet with its unpromising appearance, it becomes afterwards extremely interesting, and is the purest source of the history of those days. We have a short supplement by his son Giacchetto, and Paulini Compagni succeeded them.—Villani, who died in 1348, hath also written a general history, which comes down to his death. The two first books have a little merit, the rest a great share of it. Though he has not writ-

Villani.

ten

(*h*) " Come Silla Romano cominciò case e capanne nel piano dove è oggi Firenze, e questi fù il principiatore di Firenze. ——— Come Cattelino trattava trattato in Roma. ——— Come i Romani andarono a Fiesole ov' era Catellino. ——— Come i Romani furono sconfitti al fiume Arion da Catellino. ——— Come Catellino e sua gente sconfissono e amazzarono Fiorino Rè Romano, e della venuta di Giulo Cesare con l' oste de Romani. ——— Come Catellino ebbe Bellisea moglie di Fiorino. ——— Come un centurione teneva Teverina figluola di Fiorino et di Bellisea, e come pervenne agli orecchi di Bellisea, e come la riebbe, e come poi il detto centurione se ne la portò via maliziosamente. ——— Come Giulio Cesare assediò Fiesole, e stettevi otto anni e mezzo, e come l' ebbe. ——— Come i Senatori deliberarono, come Firenze si chiamasse. ——— Come Catellino uscito fuori di Fiesole con tutta sua baronnia fù da Cesare sconfitto. ——— Della venuta di Attile flagellum Dei, e come disfè Firenze magna. ——— Come i Romani rifeciono Firenze. ——— Come a Fiesole è la miglior aria che sia in tutta Europia, e del bagno di Catellino et d' Uberto suo figluolo. ——— Come Uberto tornò a Roma, e poi Giulio Cesare il mandò a Firenze, la quale per lui crebbe. ——— Come d' Uberto discesono gli Uberti di Firenze. ——— Come Cesare fù morto, et d'Attaviano Imperadore. ——— Come Attaviano avendo sospetto d' Uberto lo mandò in Sansogna con molti compagni, &c. &c."

 ten as a philosopher, or caught indeed the spirit of the Greek and Latin historians, or even that of the Moderns of any eminence; yet he has left far behind him the cold and dry Chroniclers of the middle age, who rather indicate than give any account of events, with the supinest apathy relate the most disastrous accidents, and see with equal eye,

"A hero perish, or a sparrow fall."

In Villani both men and actions have their proper physiognomy. The incomparable simplicity of Foissart, the just and admirable delineator of chivalry, may perhaps be wanting; in every other sense Villani is his equal; and he has been generally allowed to have been one of the most faithful historians (*i*). Villani's attachment to the Guelphs is well known, and yet he has spoken freely of the Popes; and we receive more instruction on the private history and intrigues of the see of Rome than from any other author.—His brother Matteo, and his nephew Filippo, have continued these annals as far as 1363, and with the same character of impartiality.

Filippo

(*i*) The Abbe Vertot is in possession of the character of an authentic historian, and yet having occasion to introduce the narrative of a siege into one of his historical compositions, he staid so long for his materials that he was out of patience, and finished his work without them. When they reached him, he said, coldly, "J'en suis faché, mais mon seige est fait."

Filippo Villani is the first author of a literary history, and he is blamed for having confined it within too narrow bounds, and offering a drop of water to those who were dying of thirst. The Count Mazuchelli, whose labours have illuminated the Florentine literature, printed at Venice in 1747, an Italian translation of this treatise of Filippo Villani, though it does not contain the whole of the Latin text.

A number of old chronicles and domestic memoirs of the Florentine families, such as the Pitti, Corsini, Carducci, Albizzi, Velluti, and Morelli, have been slightly mentioned. They are the rich mirrors of private life, and the curious monuments of that ancient simplicity so peculiarly necessary for a small republic, though it may not be compatible with great and extensive empire. There are those who, with the band of prejudice upon their eyes, are perpetually declaiming on the departed virtue, which is no more, and crying out " O gran Bontà " de Cavalieri antiqui (*a*)." Modes of life, however, because they differ from our own, may not have been on the whole preferable to ours; and the philosopher who coolly takes a survey of the present and the past, naturally thinks that Man, in point of moral rectitude, has been always nearly what he is.—Nestor said:

" Hδη

(*a*) *Ariosto. Orlando. Furioso. Canto* 1. 22.

"Ηδη (*b*) γαρ ποτ' εγω και αρειοσιν, ηεπερ ὑμιν
Ανδρασιν ὡμιλησα, και ου ποτε μ' ὁιγ' αθεριζον.
Ου γαρ πω τοιους ιδον ανερας, ουδε ιδωμαι,
Ὁιόν Πειριθοον τε, Δρυαντα τε, ποιμενα λαων,
Καινεα τ', Εξαδιον τε, και αντιθεον Πολυφημον,
Θησεα τ' Αιγειδην, επιεικελον αθανατοισι (*c*)."

And yet his Polyphemus, the equal of the Gods, was little better than a savage.

After a review of the state of letters in Tuscany before Cosmo de' Medici, the Greek exiles, who took refuge in Italy, in his time, and were received with great civility at Florence, are next entitled to attention. Father Gradenigo has in vain endeavoured to prove, in a letter to Cardinal Quirini, printed at Venice 1742, that the Greek language has been cultivated in Italy since the twelfth century, but his system has not any argument for its

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(*b*) *Homeri Iliad.* 1. 260—265.

(*c*) "A godlike race of heroes once I knew,
Such as no more these aged eyes shall view!
Lives there a chief to match Pirithous' fame,
Dryas the bold, or Ceneus' deathless name?
Theseus endu'd with more than mortal might,
Or Polyphemus like the Gods in fight."

Pope's Homer's Iliad, Book 1. 350—356.

The Greek Poet applied to Polyphemus the epithet only of "αντιθεον," "Equal to the Gods." Mr. Pope has added "in fight." Yet he took the idea very naturally from the succeeding line:

"Καρτιστοι δη κεινοι επιχθονιων τραφεν ανδρων."

its support. The proverb "Græcum est non potest "legi," is supposed to have originated from Accursus, a celebrated Civilian of Florence, in the thirteenth century, and his early scholars. When they stumbled by accident on a Greek word their interpretation was suspended. They ingenuously acknowledged, as it was Greek, it was not to be read; and thus getting over the difficulty they resumed the explication of the Latin text.

The Abbè Longuerue speaks of a dissertation by some Jacobin or other, tending to prove that St. Thomas Aquinas studied Aristotle in the original, and was complete master of it. The learned Abbè admits, however, the dissertation to be at least as paradoxical as the famous treatise under the title of "La Fatalitè de St. Cloud," which asserts, that Iacques Clement, the asassin of Henry the IIIrd, was neither a Jacobin, of any Religious Order, nor a Roman Catholic, but an Huguenot. The Seraphic doctor was in full possession of the tenets of the Doctor of Grace, had some smattering of logick, a little cabal, was not ignorant that the soul was a totality; that arch-angels rank between angels and principalities; that baptism regenerates itself, and by accident; that the catechism is not a sacrament but sacramental; and that a heretic prince forfeits all right to his crown, and may be deposed by his subjects, but he was an entire stranger to the Greek language.

 We

We are told that Eloisa, to keep up her acquaintance with the Greek, directed the sisters of the Paraclete founded by Abelard, and of which she was the first Abbess, to go through their office on the day of Pentecost in that language. Yet the penitent Eloisa had certainly little if any knowledge of it. How she could have acquired it, cannot be possibly divined, and it seems as extraordinary, that she could have made any use of it, when there was an absolute want of Greek authors in the West. All that we can allow to Father Gradenigo is, that Petrarch and Boccacio had tasted though imperfectly some Attic treats. The former in his work upon ignorance, which has been already brought to the Reader's recollection, speaks of the Monk Barlaam under whom he studied, till his preceptor's death deprived him of his instructions (*d*). Petrarch, however, received a present of Homer from Nicolaus Sigerus in Romania, a present of more value, as Homer was only known in Italy from the Iliad in miserable Latin verse, which had been printed several times under the name of Pindar the Theban, as appears by a commentary on Statius. Petrarch in return informed his friend that he could not have made him a nobler, a more agreeable present, or one more worthy of him; that he was not surprised at such a present from a per-

(*d*) "Quorum librorum, scilicet Platonis, ego his oculis multos vidi apud Monachum Barlaam, modernum Grajæ specimen Sophiæ, qui me docere Græcas litteras adortus, forsitan perfecisset, nisi mihi illum invidisset mors."

a person of his talents; that all the world agreed with Macrobius, in Homer's being the source of all invention; that the copy he had sent him was more precious from its being the original unmutilated by any version; that it would have been still more valuable if a person had attended it, to have explained it, and conducted him through the labyrinths of the Greek language; that from the want of such assistance Homer was dumb to him, or rather that he was deaf to Homer; that he was notwithstanding transported at the sight of him, and as Cato at his time of life had applied himself to the study of the Greek, he was not in despair, and he requested a further present of Hesiod and Euripides.

It appears very strange, that amidst a number of excellent Latin authors, the author of the Saturnales, a poor and paltry collection of anecdotes and witticisms should have been the only Greek writer either much known or much esteemed. This absurdity is not to be accounted for on any other principle than a species of fatality, very disproportionate to real merit,

"Habent sua fata libelli."

Time at last does justice to every character, and assigns to every thing its proper station.

Boccacio appears to have made rather more progress in

in the Greek, and there is the following passage in his genealogy of the gods. "Nonne ego fui qui Leontium "Pilatum, Thessalonicensem virum, a Venetiis occiduam "Babylonem quærentem, a longâ peregrinatione meis "flexi consiliis, in patriâ tenui?—Ipse ego fui qui primus "ex Latinis ab eodem in privato Iliadem audivi.—Et es-"to non satis planè perceperim, percepi tamen quantum "potui, nec dubium, si permansisset ille homo vagus "diutius penes nos, quin pleniùs percepissem (*e*)." Boccacio's passion for Greek was more violent than Petrarch's, and the warmth of our inclinations is the genenal criterion of our success.—Petrarch was a little chagrined with the rough and vulgar manners of Leontius, who had some knowledge but was very coarse and brutal (*f*). When Boccacio wished him to return, Petrarch wrote to him, and told him that though he was fully sensible how useful Leontius might be to them, he should not ever join in any application to him to return to them; that a person who had trampled contemptuously under foot the delights of Florence could not with any justice complain of his sufferings at Constantinople; and

(*e*) *Genealogia Deorum.*

(*f*) Boccacio has described the Philosopher in the following manner. "Leontius Pilatus spectu horridus homo est, turpi facie, barbâ prolixâ, et capillitio nigro, et meditatione occupatus assiduâ, moribus incultus, nec satis urbanus homo, verum, uti experientia notum fecit, litter aru Græcarum doctissimus, et quodammodo Græcarum historiarum atque fabularum artiumque inexhaustus fundus, esto Latinarum non satis adhuc instructus sit." *Genealog. Deorum.*

and that after having grown old in the forests of Hæmonia, he might be at last food for Grecian worms; and that this modern Minotaur might if he pleased return to Crete, but he did not wish to hear any more of him (*g*).—Leontius, however, did not serve for the food of worms, for on his return to Italy, he perished by a flash of lightning in a thunder-storm at sea.

Revival of the Greek Language in the West.

Notwithstanding the little progress the Greek language had yet made, the age of Cosmo de' Medici, and that of the Council of Florence, including the few years which preceded it, may be considered as the true era of its restoration in the West. Of the Divine influence in this Council there can be little doubt, if we are disposed to believe an extraordinary circumstance which is said to have distinguished it. St. Bernard, who attended it, was a monk of Florence, and very anxious to address the Greek ecclesiastics, in order to persuade them of the purity of the Roman Church, and induce them to an union with it; but he laboured under the misfortune of being

(*g*) "De Leontio, seu Leone, olim nostro, qui Thessalus dici mavult quam Italicus, non muto sententiam et jure subnixam, et tuo demum judicio comprobatam. Nunquam ergo literis meis aut nunciis revocabitur, quamvis roget. Maneat ubi elegit, et quo insolenter abiit, illic flebiliter degat. Qui tanto fastu cum in omni fortuna turpi tum in paupertate turpissimo, delicias Florentinas sprevit, tanto gemitu Byzantinam ferat inopiam: denique qui culta damnavit, senescat per me licebit in sylvis Hæmoniis et Græcis esca sit vermibus, aut si libet, ubi, quod nescio an tu noris, mihi plane compertum est, multos olim egit annos, ad Cretensis labyrinthi custodiam revertatur." *Petrarch. Epist.* 1. *lib.* 6.

being an entire stranger to the language. In defiance of the difficulty he had to struggle with, he boldly rose, in the midst of the assembly, in full assurance that "The "Lord's arm was not shortened," and that having once conferred the gifts of tongues on the Apostles, and enabled them to speak to "Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, "the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappa-"docia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Jews, "Cretes, and Arabians, in their own tongues," he would bestow on him the gift he wanted. What he believed would come to pass, is said to have done so; and St. Bernard spoke with the fluency and elegance of a native Grecian. This miracle was, however, of short duration, and was observed to last only whilst it was immediately necessary; for the moment St. Bernard finished his harangue, he knew no more of the language than his nurse.

Emanuel Chrysoloras.

Emanuel Chrysoloras, the Bysantine, had arrived in Italy long before the capture of Constantinople, and was the first person who renewed the taste and study for the Greek language. Venice, Rome, and Florence, had experienced the happiest effects of his residence, but his merit, which attracted Cosmo de' Medici's notice, drew down upon him the envy of many persons, and he was exposed to much ill-treatment. Even his venerable beard was not spared, which he retained from the custom of

his

his own country. It was supposed to be very populously inhabited (*a*), and occasioned him many wanton insults, as ridiculous as provoking. Wearied out with these repeated provocations, he took refuge beyond the Alpes, and retired into Germany in disgust; but he was universally allowed to have been one of the most learned, the wisest, and most eloquent of his countrymen.

One of the facts perhaps least known, though undoubtedly attested (*b*), is an event during the Council of Florence. The Emperor John Palæologus strangled his Patriarch for his obstinacy and absurdity. On his return to his own Capital, Bessarion, the Archbishop of Nice, filled the appointment, who was a principal instrument in the pretended re-union of the two Churches. From the part which this Prelate took, he became so completely odious to the Greek clergy, that all the authority of his master, who then tottered on his throne, was not sufficient to establish him in his See. Yet what at first seemed to be a misfortune, proved in the end his happiness.

Bessarion.

(*a*) Filelfo remarks in one of his epistles, "Sunt qui Manuelem Chrysoloram, summum illum et sapientem virum, barbam pediculosam appellant."—The classical reader will recollect the Emperor Julian's description of himself: "Αυτος προσθεικα τον βαθυν τυτονι πωγωνα . . . . ταυτα τοι διαθεοντων ανεχομαι των φθειρων ὁσπερ εν λοχμη των θηριων." *Misopogon*, 338, 339.

(*b*) *Amyrutzes de Conc. Flor. ad. Demetr. Paleolog. apud Allat. de perp. Cons. p.* 886.

happiness. His merit and his courtesy had made such a powerful impression on the members of the Roman Church, that he obtained without difficulty a Cardinal's hat, and in the Conclave of Calixtus the IIIrd, he was near being elected Pope (*c*).—Nicholas the Vth, could not have had a more worthy successor. Bessarion translated very faithfully a part of Xenophon, though his Latin is not elegant or correct. Attached to the House of Medici, and intimately connected with it, he had no occasion to ask for any favours, and he was the Mæcenas of his unfortunate companions. The senate of Venice became possessed, by a legacy, of his valuable library, and it is preserved with a care that renders it scarcely accessible, and almost useless.

Isidore of Thessalonica, Abbè of San Dimitri, and Bessarion, have been the only Greeks who were honoured with the Roman purple; and the former was sent to Constantinople before its capture, on the useless errand of endeavouring "to retain, in the Catholic communion, "the Greeks, who were returning to their vomits (*d*)."

George

(*c*) The Cardinals are believed to have knocked at his door, but his Conclavist was unwilling to disturb him. When he was afterwards informed of it, "Hæc tua," he said to him, "Nicolae intempestiva sedulitas et tiaram mihi et tibi Galerum eripuit." Menage gives the anecdote from Paulus Iovius (*Menagiana*, *tom.* 3. 223. 12*mo. Paris*, 1729), but Hodius (*De Græcis illustribus*, *lib.* 1. 146.), has laughed at it.

(*d*) "Ut Græcos parum firmos et ad vomitum quasi redeuntes in Ecclesiæ unione confirmaret."

George of Trebisonde.

George of Trebisonde was the first of the refugees who attempted with success any Latin versions, though they want both attention and fidelity. Sometimes he indulges himself with additions to the text, sometimes he alters it, and at others he takes the liberty of omitting what is most interesting and essential. In rapture with Aristotle, even to insanity, he supported his opinions with an enthusiasm beyond all bounds, and such were his prejudices against even the followers of any contrary sect, that their persons were not safe; and he attacked one of the most respectable of them in a public place at Florence (*e*). Nothing could indeed equal his absurdity; and many of his fellow-refugees, if they could not justify his conduct, followed his example. In general they had great genius, but along with it warm and ardent passions; and life ceased to have any charms for them when it was not animated by disputes, or invigorated by contests. The irritability of their nerves, and the acrimony of their blood occasioned a sensibility which carried them to excess in every pursuit, and their fury was extended with unrelenting indignation even to a fallen adversary.—George of Trebisonde, though with the name, was not a native of Trebisonde, but of the isle of Crete, whose parents had been originally settled at Trebisonde. The manners of the islanders, whatever pains their legislature might have employed

(*e*) "Poggius a Georgio duplici colapho cæsus." *Paul. Iov. Elog.*

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employed to form or correct them, have been always notorious; and they pretend that from what had fallen from Polybius, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Suidas, Callimachus (*f*), Strabo, Servius, and Athenæus, and particularly the passage of Epimenides, quoted by St. Paul, George of Trebisonde had blushed for Crete, and disowned his relation to it.

Amyrutzes.

Another learned person, and a real native of Trebisonde, or Tarabosan as the Turks call it, was the Peripatetic philosopher Amyrutzes, great master of the Imperial Wardrobe, who signalized himself by his pen, in favour of the Greek church, and against the decision of the Council of Florence. He became afterwards an apostate, and his glory was completely tarnished.—The arts and caresses of the Turkish Pacha were too powerful, his offers too brilliant and seductive, and Amyrutzes, dazzled and deluded, abjured Christianity with his children; one of whom, under the name of Mehemet-Beg, translated many of our books into Arabic, by the Sultan's orders. Amyrutzes received many considerable employments, as the rewards of his apostacy, from his new sovereign, and they often entered into familiar conversation, in which also Mehemet-Beg shared, on the subjects of arts, sciences, and religion. Amyrutzes, the father, had been one of the principal learned men that assisted

(*f*) "Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται. *Callimach. Hymn. ad Iovem.* 8.

assisted at the Council of the Emperor John Palæologus, when the propriety of his voyage into Italy was discussed, and he attended him to Florence.

Theodore Gaza.

Next to Emanuel Chrysoloras, Theodore Gaza of Thessalonica, who only settled at Rome after a long stay at Florence, was the most distinguished of all the Greeks. Cosmo de' Medici, and Bessarion, shewed him every attention in their power. Unlike the prattle of the sophists, his eloquence was vigorous and masculine, and gave a true image of the great writers of his native country. His assiduity in making himself perfect master of every science, his character for probity, his wise and regular conduct, rendered him an object of universal esteem, when contrasted with most of his fellow-refugees. Practical philosophy, which alone deserves the name of philosophy, had rooted itself within his mind, and without any regard for money, or any inducement from renown, he was passionately attached to truth and study. If he was not inferior to a single individual of his countrymen in point of erudition, for the elegance and purity of his Latin he was far their superior, and his Translation of Theophrastus on Plants, the Problems of Aristotle, and, above all, Aristotle's immortal History of Animals are still in general use and approbation.—Gaza's excellent Greek Grammar may be too dry, and too contracted for young scholars, according to Mon-

taigne's

taigne's (*g*) idea, but with the learned its merits are established.

Gemisthus Pletho.

The History of Gemisthus Pletho of Peloponnesus must be extended to a greater length, from his connections with Cosmo de' Medici, who had a warm and lively friendship for him, and from his having been the cause of a celebrated and acrimonious controversy, in which the Greeks and refugees took part, and combated as on a stage, to the instruction, the astonishment, and the scandal of the Italians.

Gemisthus Pletho was one of the first persons of his age for genius, and a great and learned Platonician. Full of the project of overturning Aristotle, he published a little treatise on the different sentiments of the two philosophers. It was attacked by different scholars, in particular by George Scholarius, so well known by the name of Gennadius, afterwards Patriarch of Constantinople, who received from the hands of Mahomet the

(*g*) " La leçon de votre fils se fera tantost par devis, tantost par livre : tantost son gouverneur lui fournira de l' Autheur mesme, propre à cette fin de son institution : tantost il luy en donnera la moelle, et la substance toute maschée : &c. ——— et que cette leçon ne soit plus aysée et naturelle que celle de Gaza, qui y peut faire doute ? Ce sont-là préceptes espineux et mal plaisans, et des mots vains et descharnez, où il n'y a point de prise, rien qui vous esveille l'esprit : en cette-cy l' ame trouve où mordre, où se paistre. Ce fruict est plus grand sans comparaison, et si sera plustost meury." *Essais de Montaigne, livre* 1. *c.* 25. *tom.* 1. 154. 4*to.* 1725.

the Turkish Sultan the investiture of his See on Gregory's retreat to Italy, and the same presents his predecessors had received from the Christian emperors, a Camblet robe, a white horse, a silver pastoral staff, and a thousand crowns in specie. Theodore Gaza and George of Trebisonde were after Gennadius the ablest defenders of the Aristotelian school. Gaza pointed his attack against Pletho, George opened the trenches against Pletho's supposed friend, Bessarion. As the dispute grew warm many of the subaltern Greeks offered their services as seconds, or entered into it as volunteers. These light-armed troops skirmished at a distance with various success.—Michael Apostolius, an impetuous young man in the service of the Cardinal, wrote both against Gaza and Aristotle, and the composition was nothing but a series of abuse and scandal. Andronicus of Thessalonica the son of Calista replied to him. Little had been said of Apostolius, his antagonist did himself more credit, and as the cause had lost by violence, Bessarion wrote to Apostolius and complained of his impetuosity. The letter is too long to be inserted, but as it gives us an advantageous character of the Cardinal, some extracts from it may deserve our notice.

Disputes between the Greek Refugees.

"Your zeal for Plato and his followers affords me "great satisfaction, but I do not approve of the manner "in which you defend them. It is not by injuries but "proofs, by solid and convincing arguments, that we

"should

"should either support our friends or attack our ad-"versaries. Pletho has insulted Aristotle, Theodore "has ill-treated Pletho, and you have spoken shameful-"ly of Theodore, for which you are all to be censured. "Is Aristotle the great philosopher, to whom we are in-"debted for many excellent works, to be insulted? "Pletho is a person of great learning and of uncommon "genius. Nothing can be said against him, except that "as he has attacked others, they have a right to reply "to him, and Theodore is deservedly at the head of the "Greeks. It is not your duty to speak lightly of a per-"son like him. You are young, he is of an age which is "entitled to respect. You have scarcely made yourself "master of logick, Theodore has ran through the whole "circle of arts and sciences. To oppose such a person "in you is ridiculous, and it gives me great concern to "find you have accused him of ignorance. But you have "treated Aristotle as improperly, Aristotle our guide "and master in every kind of learning. How have you "dared to call him ignorant, absurd, ungrateful, faith-"less? I could not have believed there would have "been such insolence. Even Pletho is unpardonable, "whatever respect he may be otherwise entitled to, when "he calumniates Aristotle, and how is it to be excused "in you?

"Your conduct you supposed would please me, and "it has sincerely mortified me.—Oblige me, and respect

"Theodore.

"Theodore. Honour him as your master, and take as "many lessons from him as you can.—Respecting my-"self I wished to undeceive you, and if you are desirous "of pleasing me, you will in future no more speak of "these great men as you have done. I love Plato and I "love Aristotle. I admire Pletho's genius and his ta-"lents, but I cannot approve of his ill-temper, and his "inveteracy against Aristotle. If he is to be attacked, "let him be attacked with the moderation which he pre-"served himself, whenever he found it necessary to "contradict those who were before him. Is it for us, "that in comparison of these great men are mere no-"thing, to treat them as fools, to rail at them and ridi-"cule them more than ever Cleon or Hyperbolus were "ridiculed on the stage? Do not, my dear Apostolius, be-"lieve, if men animated with the genius of Plato and Aris-"totle, or even that of Pletho, if Plotinus, Atticus, Por-"phyry, and some others had a right to correct Aristotle "and Plato and sometimes to blame them, that we have "any such pretensions. You have treated Aristotle, my "dear friend, very unhandsomely without having said "one word in defence of Pletho. You have spoken ve-"ry disrespectfully, and without reason of Gaza, whose "knowledge is every where allowed. In short, instead "of having done what would have been agreeable to me, "you have exceedingly displeased me."

After this generous extract from Bessarion, is it to be believed

believed on the authority of such a writer as Brantome, that this moderate and discreet Prelate, when he went as Legate into France, should have irritated Louis XIth so much by his imprudent partiality for the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, and other circumstances, as to make him shew his resentment to him in his first audience by laying hold of his beard, and saying

"Barbara Græca genus retinent, quod habere solebant?"

Louis XI. was not a decent Prince, but he had understanding, and too much understanding to have been guilty of such an outrage against the law of nations (*a*). All the authority of Albert Krantz, who passes for an authentic writer, can scarcely persuade us that the Czar Volodimer, when drunk with brandy, ordered an ambassador's

(*a*) Hodius, in his treatise "De Græcis illustribus," has given some account of Bessarion's embassy, and appears to believe the anecdote. "Spei plenus in Galliam venit, multa de Rege, non pauciora de se promittens. Verum ei ob falsam de fide sua suspicionem incassum ivere labores suscepti. Mox ut regnum ingressus est, ipsi regi cœpit esse suspectus. Progredi ad eum est vetitus. Menses duos ludibrio habitus, tertio tandem admittitur. Fertur illum a rege fraudis ac perfidiæ nomine facete perstrictum fuisse: qui his eum salibus aggressus est, contrectata blande ejus barba, quam promissam pexamque ad delicias gerebat, exporrecto ad mimicam hilaritatem vultu, pronunciavit hunc versiculum apud Grammaticos tritum,

'Barbara Græca genus retinent, quod habere solebant.'

Innuere quippe, ut erat politulus et acutulus ingenio, rex voluit, quod barbarorum Græcorum nominum exemplo, quæ idem apud Latinos quod apud Græcos genus retinerent, pariter ipse homo Græcus, Græcam fidem, lubricam scilicet suspectamque, haberet, cujus proinde dicta promissaque flocci penderet. Uno atque eodem ingrato colloquio finitur legatio. Rediit mœstus."

Hodius. Bessarion. Cardinal. lib. l. 5. 150.

bassador's hat to be nailed on his head, because he had not paid him the respect of pulling it off on speaking to him. The tale is of harsh digestion, notwithstanding the Russians, without any exception of their Czars, were a strange people, before Peter the Ist, their creator, and the four succeeding Empresses. That in the fifteenth century the Most Christian King should have insulted in this manner a Cardinal, and a Legate, a LATERE, is not to be supported but on the concurrent evidence of the most respectable and cotemporary historians. Monsr. Wicquefort might have amused himself with adopting this tale from Brantome (*b*), and may consider Bessarion as impolitic and indiscreet as he pleases.—That he received few civilities in his mission, and totally failed in it is unquestionable.—It is said he died at Rome of chagrin and disappointment. The fact may be true, though death, from an excess of joy or grief, is always problematical, and at fourscore years of age still more so. Had Brantome been in possession of more accurate intelligence, he would have informed his readers, that the monarch's resentment arose from Cardinal Bessarion having given him offence in the proceedings against Cardinal Balue, having applied warmly, though excusably, for his pardon;

(*b*) Brantome tells the story very ludicrously; but he asks, "Ou diable ce Roy avoit-il appris ces vers pour les dire et pratiquer si bien à propos?" (*Œuvres de Brantome, tom.* 5. 46. *Paris*, 1787), which seems to imply that he gave no credit to it.

don; and having made many, but useless, efforts to deliver his colleague from that iron cage, which Philip de Commines expected, and where a perfidious prelate, for ten years realized the History of Bajazet.

To return to Gemisthus Pletho.—The little flying squall in his life-time, to which his philosophical work had exposed him, was a gentle prelude to the tempest which afterwards assailed his memory. Some previous whispers had announced the existence of a manuscript, which he concealed with the utmost caution, and on his death-bed it was confided to Demetrius Palæologus, to whom Amyrutzes had addressed his relation of the Council of Florence. Whether the book was ever introduced into the Forms is uncertain, but it was sufficiently known to make a great noise. Its author had composed it on the model of Plato's Republic, and its title announced that "it treated of the Laws, the best form of Government, the public and private Duties of Man, and the modes of life calculated to render him more perfect, more innocent, and happier." The whole was divided into three books, and is now only known to us by the extracts of the Patriarch Gennadius, whose testimony is of some weight, though not entirely exempt from some suspicion. Pletho's learning was acknowledged, and yet the Patriarch accuses him of ignorance. There had been however literary disputes between them, which had soured the temper of Gennadius, and as Pletho first supported

ported the party of the bishops, Mark of Ephesus, Anthony of Heraclea, and Sophronius of Anchiale, on the question of the re-union of the Churches of Greece and Rome, his subsequent desertion of them for the Latin interest did not contribute to restore its suavity.

According to Gennadius the visionary legislator's wildness and extravagance appeared in every page, and particularly in the articles respecting religion. He acknowledges many deities, some superior "Ὑπερ Ουρανιας," others of an inferior nature, some existing from the earliest antiquity, some of later origin, and of all ages. All these deities obeyed a superior power Zeus, the principal divinity of the Pagans, but controuled by Fate. The stars, in his system, were souls, the demons neither impure nor evil spirits, and the world eternal. He established polygamy, and had no objection to a complete degradation of the female sex in a community of their persons. When the patriarch had intelligence of the appearance of this posthumous work, he lost not a single moment in a victorious refutation of it, by committing it instantly to the flames. A grave author has observed, "that burning a book, and refuting it, are "two different things;" but, if the work was what Gennadius represents it to have been, there would have been little difficulty in either. The signal was no sooner given, than Pletho's ancient enemies, who had respected his abilities or feared them, fastened like hungry dogs upon

upon their prey. A Latin book appeared immediately, under the title of "A Comparison between Aristotle and "Plato," and at the end of it there is a deluge of invective against Plato and his adherents. Pletho is treated in the following manner: "A second Mahomet has been "born and educated amongst us, and if we are not on "our guard, he will be as dangerous by his mischievous "tenets. With great art and elegance he has drawn "up new rules for the conduct of Human Life, and it "is generally believed that he has vomited a greater "number of blasphemies against the Christian Religion. "It is at least certain, that he was a zealous Platonician, "and that he had no other ideas than Plato's of the nature "of the Gods, the soul, and sacrifices. At Florence he "declared, that in a few years the whole world would, "by mutual agreement, embrace one faith, and one re-"ligion, the moment it was preached to it. On being "asked if it was the Christian or Mahometan religion, he "replied, it was neither one nor the other, but a different "one, and nearly Paganism."—George of Trebisonde was the only person that could be suspected of being the author of such a furious libel, and Bessarion replied to him by a work "In Calumniatorem Platonis." An apology for Pletho might have been naturally expected, as the Cardinal had always considered him as his master, and a genius of the first class. Pletho was not mentioned, his cause was desperate, and the Patriarch's ignominious sentence respecting his posthumous publica-

tion,

tion, had blasted his character so effectually, that his best friends were silent, or gave it up.—This treatise on an imaginary republic, and its laws, which first appeared under such unfortunate auspices, is lost, without the possibility of recovery, if, as some writers have conjectured, Pletho's Commentary on the Chaldaic and Magic Oracles of Zoroaster may not be a fragment of it preserved by accident. Notwithstanding the load of infamy with which Pletho's Republic has been overwhelmed, there have not been wanting writers to lament its loss, under the opinion that its design was not in any manner to undermine the Christian faith, but merely to develop Plato's system of philosophy, and explain his political and religious ideas. They who are masters of the tenets of the Alexandrine Platonicians, and who are acquainted with their mode of reasoning, may easily judge of Pletho, who was a steady scholar of Ammonius and Plotinus, and split on the same rock they had been wrecked before him. In a word, he was a true Theurgus, an Alexandrine Syncretist, or a disputant very careless in distinguishing what is only imagined from what is conceived; and, on the contrary, believed that he conceived what was only imaginary. Most of the old philosophical errors are owing to this inaccuracy, and in particular those of the Platonicians, and more peculiarly the Alexandrine Platonicians.

Iohannes Lascaris.

Iohannes Lascaris, surnamed Rhyndacenus from the city of

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of Rhyndacus, situated on the banks of a river of that name, celebrated in the Roman annals for the victory of Lucullus over Mithridates, was the descendant of a family that had given emperors to Greece, and afterwards sovereigns to its dismembered provinces of Bithynia and Adrianople. From an habitual indolence he could not submit to any severe study; yet he was well versed in the literature of his own country, and promised many considerable works, which were only promised, though he lived to be a hundred years of age. Posterity is, notwithstanding, indebted to him for the restoration of the capitals of the Greek alphabet, which he employed in a little collection of moral sentences, and in the preface he has given a narrative of the difficulty he experienced in his searches after the true figures of these letters, from the oldest medals and most antiquated monuments. His relation Constantine Lascaris was a Professor of Greek Literature at Rome, Florence, and in Sicily, and was Bembo's preceptor. His memory has however suffered by a pious or impious fraud in a supposed letter from the Virgin Mary after her assumption by St. Luke her secretary to the people of Messina (*c*), with an assurance of

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(*c*) The Duke d' Ossone, one of their Viceroys, Mons'. Tenhoven adds, had been guilty of some profane scandal, according to his biographer, Greg. Leti, on the subject of this miracle. "Le Duc s' acquita devotement de ce devoir à genoux, mais, apres s' etre releve, il ne put s' empecher de dire, 'Notre Dame nous aurait obligés plus sensiblement, si elle nous avait envoyé une bonne lettre de change. Je m'en servirais presentement, pour battre les Turcs sur leurs cotes et assurer les notres de tant de courses si prejudiciables à cette ile.'"

of her protection. Constantine Lascaris first produced this letter, and from some other little forgeries, of which he was convicted, he has been generally believed to have been its author. If he had been guilty of such a fraud in civil life, no person would have endeavoured to defend his memory, and to an unprejudiced mind a religious forgery is equally culpable and criminal. But such has been the force of religious zeal, that the end has been alone contemplated without any hesitation as to the means, and the Bigot with blind credulity believes every stratagem to be meritorious that tends to the advantage or interest of his sect.

"Tantum Relligio potuit suadere malorum."

Iohannes Argyropylus.

To the illustrious Refugees we must add Iohannes Argyropylus, who retired into Italy, when the Turks overspread his native country. Cosmo de' Medici gave him a most gracious reception, and attached him to his person. "My Son," said Cosmo, leaning on the cradle of one of his children, "if you are born to be happy you "will have Argyropylus for your preceptor." The Greek Professor out of gratitude dedicated to him the Translation of Aristotle's confused System of Physicks, and his unproductive Treatise upon Morals. Theodore Gaza had employed his leisure hours in a similar version, but on its publication by Argyropylus, he burnt his

his own (*a*). The merit of the two Professors would not admit of a comparison, and as Gaza felt his superiority, he sacrificed his labours to his friendship. In any other person it would have been heroism.

Demetrius Argyropylus.

Demetrius Argyropylus, of the same family with Iohannes, was another refugee who came to Florence with a curious letter of recommendation. "Demetrius Argyropylus petiit a me, ut se tibi per literas commendarem. Modo intelligas eum esse Demetrium, qui cum GRAVITATE ac VERO nihil habuerit commune unquam. Ex Librario non inepto, quantum ad formam attinet, vult videri philosophus, id quod ex ORNATU CAPITIS LONGIOREQUE PALLIO tibi facile fuerit judicare. Nam neque VITA INSTITUTIS neque DOCTRINA ULLA PHILOSOPHI QUICQUAM SAPIT. Verum linguâ est et celeri et expeditâ et suavi, ut Græcorum nemini cedat, voce quoque et clarâ et sonorâ. Rem omnem tenes. Hominem tibi commendo (*b*)." Yet we are not to be surprised, if in the crowds of fugitives, who fled out of every corner of Greece,

"Hic

(*a*) "Aristotelis naturalia atque moralia generosè transtulit, ita applaudente Gaza vetere sodali, ut quædam ab se pariter translata combureret, ne amicissimi hominis crescenti famæ officerent, si ad æmulationem odiosâ comparatione certaretur." *Paul. Jov.*

(*b*) *Epist. Philelphi.*

"Hic altâ Sicyone, ast hic Amydone relictâ,
Hic Andro, ille Samo, hic Trallibus aut Alabandis (c),"

and came in quest of an establishment in Italy, some undeserving and worthless characters should have been discovered. The ten thousand Greek auxiliaries were not all equal undoubtedly in courage and abilities, and the nation had already degenerated, and was now hastening fast towards its decline. At the end of the fifteenth century, a learned native of Arezzo (*d*) acknowledged that the Greeks, formerly so famous, and lately their masters, then barely knew their alphabet. Chalcondylus Marullus, Marcus Musurus, and a few others, such as Constantine Ducas, Maurus Cordatus, Cyrillas Lucar, Leo Allatius, and Demetrius Cantimir, are the only exceptions. The progress of their declension has been uniform and uninterrupted, and whilst they have preserved their exquisite sensibility, their harmonious soul, and their happy climate, they have sunk into the same ignorance with their tyrants. They may not be reduced to the melancholy degradation which the face of Egypt at present wears, once the fostering nurse of arts and sciences, now the receptacle but of the plague, where the inhabitants merely vegetate; where their knowledge consists in hatching

Declension of Greece, its Arts, and Letters.

(*c*) *Juvenalis Satyr.* 3. 69.

(*d*) Leonardo Aretino.

hatching annually millions of chickens in their stoves, and where they are, what their ancient deities were, beasts. Such a description would not be exactly applicable to the state of Greece in our days, but indolence has laid it waste, and ignorance has ruined it. Their Archons, and other governors, in understanding and information, are almost on a level with the common people, and it would be vain to search for learning in the cloister. The knowledge of their Papas and Proto-papas is as limited. They only fast and drink. Visit the richest convents of Arcadi, Penteli Cyriani, Agiamoni, Panagia, and Sandimitri, and their cellars will be found stocked with the Malvoisi Retimo, and the exquisite wines of Tenedos and the Archipelago, whilst the few ordinary books which they are masters of, sleep undisturbed in the dust, a prey to filth and worms. Even their beautiful and divine language is forgotten, and Tournefort, in his travels through the country, found the scarcest plants, the "Aristolochia "subhirsuta, folio oblongo, flore maximo," and the "Verbascum Græcum, fruticosum, folio sinuato candidis"simo," sooner than a native who understood the Grecian language. "Vous serez surpris, Monseigneur," says he, in his correspondence with the Comte de Pontcharrtain, "d'aprendre qu' á peine y a-t' il sur les terres des "Turcs une douzaine de personnes habiles dans la con"naissance du Grec litteral."

On the ruin of the Christian empire of Constantinople the

the language in fact ceased to be a living language, but the difference in its duration with the Latin is really wonderful. From the age of Hesiod and Homer to the era now treated of, including a period of some thousand years, we find an uninterrupted succession of Grecian authors. A greater or a less degree of eloquence, but a purity of style is visible in all their works; whilst the Latin tongue only attained its perfection towards the end of the second Punic war, degenerated gradually, and in less than two centuries became contemptible, even before Rome had been deprived of any of her conquests. This sudden alteration in the Latin language ought not to be attributed to a want of care in the Roman people, for, on the contrary, they were extremely desirous of communicating it, and omitted no opportunity of introducing it amongst the nations they conquered. Greece took no such precautions, and therefore it is from the character of the two languages, and the merit of the Greek and Latin authors, this interesting problem is to be resolved.

Comparison of the Greek and Latin languages.

It may be asked, what is the language of the modern Greeks? The Turkish language they have not adopted, but their flexible organs continue to exercise themselves with a number of melodious vowels, to harmonize their consonants and dipthongs, and they have established a sweet and delicious dialect instead of the idiom of Isocrates. A single observation will demonstrate the little resemblance

Modern Greek language.

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resemblance between the ancient Greek and their modern jargon. Most of the terminations of the present dialect are in an ι, whilst we learn from Athenæus that only the word Μελι (*e*) ended in this manner, though there are a few other exceptions, which the learned citizen of Naucratis has forgotten.

What is most astonishing is to find the Athenians of the little town of Setimo, so renowned formerly for the elegance of their language, speaking at present the most corrupted vulgar jargon, stuffed with Turkish, and other foreign words. Yet these were the Athenians, that once interrupted one of their orators for a mistake in the pronunciation of a syllable, and a trifling offence against the law of accents, and hissed a stranger on his offering the republic, in its distress, a sum of money, because he had made the proposal in improper terms.—Attic Genius is not however dead, and Greece, in its present clouded state of ignorance, has preserved the physical power of again becoming what it has been. Its ancient fire is not visible, but it still exists, and lives within its embers.

Monsr. de Guys, in his literary travels, has made some observations which are very applicable. "Voyez-les "causer,"

(*e*) "Τουτο δε ἡμας τηρησαι δει ὁτι ουδετερον ονομα εϛι παρα τοις Ελλησιν εις ι, λῆγον, ει μη μονον το ΜΕΛΙ· το γαρ Πεπερι, και Κομμι και Κουφι, ξενικα. *Athenai Depnos. lib.* 2. *c.* 18. *tom.* 1. 66. *folio, Lugdun.* 1612.

" causer," says he, " entre-eux, vous croiriez, à leurs ges-
" tes, à leurs mouvemens, au ton animé de leur conver-
" sation, qu'ils disputent même vivement. Point du tout:
" c'est leur vivacité naturelle qui échauffe un simple ré-
" cit, qui les porte à s'interrompre, qui fait parler, et
" rend présens les acteurs du fait qu'ils rapportent. Les
" jeunes filles, sur-tout, exagerent tout ce qu'elles ont
" vu ; les tropes, les images, les comparaisons, les figures
" leur sont familieres, et les sermens, dont je vous par-
" lerai dans la suite, viennent toujours à l'appui de ce
" qu'elles avancent. Voulez-vous, M. les entendre?
" écoutez cette jeune fille ésoufflée, qui entre dans l'ap-
" partement de sa mere.

" Ma mere, regardez la mer, voyez cet orage; ô
" Dieu! secourez-nous. On dit que le gros bateau de
" Zaphiri a péri: il a été submergé; j'ai cru le voir moi-
" même de notre Kiosk. Oui, ce gros bateau avec sa
" grand voile, j'en jure par mes yeux, il a été submergé,
" et la pauvre Paramana y étoit avec deux de ses enfans,
" qu'elle ramenoit de l'Isle de Calki. Quand elle aura
" vu la mer béante qui s'ouvroit pour la dévorer, elle
" aura embrassé ses enfans: Mes chers enfans, nous
" périssons; et c'est moi malheureuse qui vous précipite,
" qui ai osé vous risquer sur la mer, ne prévoyant pas
" cette affreuse tempête. Malheureuse mere! téméraire
" Zaphiri, qui ne connois et ne crains aucun danger!
" Méchant homme, c'est toi qui en es la cause, et tu pé-
" riras

" riras avec nous.———Ma mere, ma mere! Paramana " . . . venez vîte, venez voir Paramana qui arrive ; l'eau " de la mer découle de ses habits, elle en a bû, elle a cru " mourir : quelle joie ! je suis folle; j'ai tant prié Dieu, " et de si bon cœur, qu'elle a été sauvée.

" Une autre arrive au village, où pendant la belle Sai- " son on est rassemblé.

" Quoi ! Lucia, vous dormez, et l' on danse dans la " Prairie. Nous avons des instrumens : Stamati joue de " la lyre, Zoé mène le branle ; et toutes les meres, assi- " ses sous le grand peuplier, sont enchantées de la voir. " Venez donc, et que la fiere Zoé ne dise pas : J' ai eu " l'honneur de la danse, j'ai mené seule le branle, seule " j'ai été applaudie, j'ai brillé à la tête de mes compag- " nes. Elle le diroit, j'en jure par vos yeux, sans ajou- " ter, parce que Lucia n'y étoit pas. Vîte donc, que je " vous aide à mettre cette robe rose qui vous sied si bien, " et ce bouquet de lilas sur votre tête. Doublons le pas, " j'entends la lyre : ah ! courons, courons, Lucia, et " qu'en vous voyant, Zoé à qui la danse a donné le rou- " ge et l'éclat des plus belles couleurs, pâlisse et sèche de " dépit (*f*)."

Monsr. de Guys adds that he has translated literally, and

(*f*) *Voyage Literaire de la Grece par Mons. Guys. tom.* 1. 95—98. *8vo. Paris.* 1776.

and from this specimen we cannot doubt of some Greeks being yet poets, and able to produce both songs and odes. They still sing, but they do not sing as Homer and Sappho once sung; their Anacreons employ themselves on ballads, and their Pindars in Acrostics.

With the Greek vivacity judgment is not always wanting. The physicians of the Pachas in different parts of the Ottoman empire are mostly Greeks, and those who have entered into commerce have made rapid and large fortunes. The houses of Capitanaki, Pathousa, Koleti, Kontouros, Kouloukoubaros, and many others prove the fact, and in more favourable times under happier circumstances (*a*) the modern Greeks might again distinguish themselves.—Yet after all we cannot hope without a miracle to see these humble slaves of the Ottoman Porte resume their ancient energy, and appear with the same glory as their ancestors in the bright days of Athens and of Sparta, when they defended their liberties against the innumerable hosts of Xerxes. Their spirit and their manly vigour have degenerated; despotism, infernal despotism has blasted to the root their courage and their heroism, and their evil genius has broken into shivers beyond

(*a*) A modern Artist of the first abilities has beautifully stated the force of Freedom and Slavery even on his own Profession. " L' uomo libero fa tutto quel che può, più, o meno, secondo la sua capacità; ma lo schiavò fa al più quello, che

CHAP. II. yond the time of recollection, the mould (*b*) in which their Miltiades and Leonidas were formed.

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gli si comanda, e guasta la sua propria volontà, colla violenza, che gli si fa, per ubbidire. L'abito di farlo opprime finalmente la sua capacità, e la sua razza peggiora, fino, a non più desiderare quello, che dispera ottenere."

Opere di Mengs. v. i. *p.* 228.

(*b*) It is a matter of curiosity sometimes to trace a sentiment through its travels. The late General Burgoyne in his admirable comedy of the Heiress was supposed to have introduced a similar idea from Rousseau. "Si la nature a bien ou mal fait de briser LE MOULE DANS LEQUEL ELLE M'A JETTE, c'est ce dont on me peut juger qu'après m'avoir lu." (*Les Confessions, livre* 1).—But Rousseau had in all likelihood transplanted it from the Italian of the

"Natura il fece e poi ruppa la stampa."

On the subject of Plagiarism an Author has observed "It is what the greatest poets and painters have allowed themselves in. Rafaelle has borrowed many figures and groups of figures from the Antique, and Milton has even translated many times from Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Tasso, and put them as his own; Virgil himself has copied. And indeed it is hard a man having had a good thought should have a patent for it for ever." (*Richardson's Works*, 38, *4to.* 1792).—Yet after all, the same thoughts may have been original ones in different Writers, for in the words of Dr. Bentley, "Omnes in multa incidimus, nescientes illa jam ab aliis esse occupata."

Emenbat. in M. T. Ciceronis, Tusc. Quest. 4. 21.

CHAP. III.

FLORENTINE Literature—Colucio Salutati—Leonardo Bruni—Carlo Marsupini—Nicola Nicolo—Poggio Bracciolini—Character of his History of Florence—Criticism on Poggio's Works—Character of Jerome of Prague—Ambrogio de Camaldules—His Visitation of the Italian Convents—Tomaso de Sarzano—Rafaello Volterrano—Francesco Filelfo—Æneas Sylvius—His Letter to the Sultan Mahomet—Marsilio Ficino—Aristotle, and Observations on his Philosophy—Plato, and the Platonic Philosophy—Criticism on the Writings of Marsilio Ficino—Paolo de Pozzo Toscanelli—Gianozzo Manetti—Luc Paciolo.

CHAP. III.

THE arrival of the illustrious Greek refugees might not have been attended with any beneficial consequences, if Tuscany had not then happily been filled with a number of great men, who only wanted an opportunity to display their talents. It presented itself, and they seized on it with avidity. Colucio Salutati the Florentine, and secretary to the republic, a collection of whose letters has been printed, was one of the first scholars of Chrysoloras, and he was said by one of his cotemporaries to have been "Communis doctorum omnium parens (*a*)." His

Florentine literature.

Colucio Salutati.

(*a*) *Poggii Orat. fun. Leonardi Aretin.*

CHAP. III.

His eloquence, formed on the model of Demosthenes, gave him a great ascendency in public, and Philip Maria Duke of Milan, observed of him as another Philip had observed of the Athenian orator, that he dreaded more the invectives of Colucio than the spears of his enemies.

Leonardo Bruni.

Leonardo Bruni, or Aretino, from his being a native of Arezzo, was also the Florentine Secretary, and a person of great learning and abilities. Amongst other obligations, we are indebted to him for "Cicero de Finibus," and "De Natura Deorum," where the Roman eagle has taken so high a soar. Aretino's History of Florence is written in tolerable Latin, and to write in tolerable Latin was then great merit, for there is not a single book in it from Boethius, who lived in the sixth century, to this period, which has either elegance or any other circumstance to recommend it. Aretino likewise wrote a history of his own times in Italian, and one of ancient Greece and the Goths. From the last his memory has suffered, and the critics have accused him of having stolen it from Procopius, and translated the wars of Justinian with the Goths, the Vandals, and the Persians. Varillas has embellished the supposed Plagiarism, but Aretino ingenuously owned the source from which he drew his materials, and indeed it was the only place in which he could have found them. The rest, he adds,

is

is all his own (*b*), and a comparison of the two works will prove the sincerity of the declaration. CHAP. III.

Carlo Marsupini. Carlo Marsupini, or Aretino, succeeded Leonardo Bruni in his office, and his literary character is equally established. For the intimacy with which he was honoured by Cosmo de' Medici, we have poetical authority:

> "Intima tu magni noras præcordia Cosmi,
> Et quæcunque sacro pectore clausa tenet (*c*)."

Such an intimacy naturally supposes some merit, and it may at least create a doubt of the propriety of that abuse

(*b*) Ordo vero et dispositio et verba mea sunt, ac meo arbitratu excogitata et posita. Rerum gestarum notitiam ab eo sumens, in cæteris omnibus ab eo recessi, utpote qui hoc unum habeat boni, quod bello interfuit. Cætera illius sunt spernenda."

(*c*) "Quis tenuit lacrymas, quis non crudelia dixit
Astra, quis in totâ non fuit urbe dolens?
Sed, quod præcipuum est, magni suspiria Cosmi,
Et lacrymas tanto vidimus ire viro.
. . . .
. . . .
Intima tu magni nôras præcordia Cosmi,
Et quæcunque sacro pectore clausa tenet,
Nec comitem rebus dubiis te respuit unquam,
Consuleret populo cum bonus ille suo.
Tu felix, tanti posses qui Principis aures
Implere, et tanto grata referre viro."

Eleg. in obit. Car. Aret.

CHAP. III. abuse which some writers have bestowed on him (*d*). In one of the manuscripts preserved amongst the Archives at Florence, with the title of "Il Priorista," even his spiritual safety is uncharitably questioned, from his having died without confession, without the sacraments, and not very like a christian (*e*).

Nicola Nicolo. Nicola Nicolo was rather a favourite of Cosmo de' Medici, though, from an envious and captious humour, he was generally disliked. He was said to have been very active in forcing Chrysoloras out of Florence, and to have boasted of it (*f*). His friends have reversed the medal,

(*d*) "Sunt nonnulli qui memonuerunt, ut mihi a te caveam: moliri enim te mihi nescio quas insidias, ut qui eruditione et probitate nequeas, facinore mihi noceas. Sum equidem id miratus, quod neque Deum metuens neque hominum famam, tanto sceleri te obnoxium sis facturus, præsertim cum nullam habeas justam adversus nos causam. Non enim mihi vitio dandum est, si te doctior existimer magisque disertus, sed ingenio ignaviæque tuæ, qui si ita litteris et bonarum artium disciplinæ operam dares, ut exercendo fænori et flagitio, esses me fortassè multò superior."
Ep. Phil. ad Car. Aret.

(*e*) "Dio l'habbia onorato in cielo, se l'ha meritato, che non si stima, perchè morì senza chonfessione e chomunione, e non chome buon Christiano."
Bandini, Spec. Litt. Flor.

(*f*) "Manuelem Chrysoloram, quem omnes ob singularem scientiam moresque probatissimos colebamus; hic unus inventus est, qui omnifariam injuriis contumelisque lacesseret, quoad consilium cepit ex hac urbe demigrandi. Tu monstrum importunum atque nefarium; tu inquam nebulo, illud sapientiæ jubar, illum litterarum solem, quo illuminati sumus, ex hac urbe pepulisti: tu calumniis, tu infamiis, tu omni scelere sanctissimum illum virum persequi non veritus es."
Orat. Leon. Aret. in Nic. Nic. nebulonem maledicum.

"Ne ægrè feras Nicolai Nicoli detractionem: eo enim est homo ingenio, ut neminem doctum virum relinquat intactum mordacitate suâ, quique ne Soli quidem

medal, and represented him as a warm friend to letters (*a*), though neither a writer of any consequence nor learning. Unable however to conceal his captious humour and petulant temper, they have lamented it rather as a constitutional misfortune than a vice.

Poggio Bracciolini.

The celebrated Poggio Bracciolini, another Florentine, was the Republic's secretary after Aretino, and after he had wasted the best part of his life in the Papal service as secretary of Briefs. He continued the history of Florence, which Leonardo Aretino had undertaken, and Poggio's part of it is highly esteemed for its style. Yet a partiality for Florence is very visible, and from a spirit of Patriotism too warm a colouring has been given to its enemies and to its friends. Sannazarius hath said of him,

"Dum Patriam laudat, damnat dum Poggius hostem,
Nec malus est civis, nec bonus Historicus."

One common fault has been found with Aretino and his successor. As much as they have enlarged on foreign affairs

ipsi pareat, utpote qui et Manuelem Chrysoloram, sapientem et summum illum virum, barbam pediculosam adhuc semper nominet." *Epist. Philelph.*

(*a*) Poggio has given Nicola Nicolo, the character of "Vir omnium quos nostra etas tulit modestiâ et continentiâ ornatissimus."

Character of his History of Florence.

affairs and the hostilities of the Florentines with their neighbours, on the internal factions and disputes they are laconic and concise. Their dissimulation cannot escape their readers attention, and they coldly and cautiously express themselves in such a manner, as neither to afford instruction nor amusement; though the Florentine dissentions form the most interesting part of the history of that republic. No other annals perhaps furnish more numerous or more striking examples of the fatal effects of disunion and civil discord. Sometimes the dissention rises in the bosom of Florence itself, sometimes it is occasioned by foreign intrigues, and the seeds are brought from a distance to be sown in a soil so prolific and so peculiarly proper for them. Previous to the elevation of the House of Medici the first disunion was amongst the nobles, the citizens and nobles then formed two rival parties, and the citizens and populace afterwards opposed each other. Every succeeding day produced skirmishes between the contending factions, and it often happened that out of the victorious party two fresh ones started up. As one hydra was demolished, twenty others burst into existence. Independent of these important historical circumstances, so much blood was spilt in these dissentions; they occasioned so many animosities, so many exiles, and the ruin of so many families; that nothing gives a higher idea of the courage, the spirit, the industry, and the resources of the ancient Florentines, than to see them recover themselves so speedily,

speedily, as it were by a miracle, from a situation, where any other people would have been irreparably lost. Such objects ought not to have been slightly passed over by any historian, but in the annals of Florence a correct and exact detail of them is indispensable. If Aretino and Poggio artfully slided over these interesting scenes, it must have been from the fear of offending the descendants of those families, whose characters they must have censured, and whose memories they must have blasted. If such were their motives, it seems they reasoned from too confined a knowledge of the human heart. Public affairs whether well or ill conducted, and extraordinary actions connected with the government of any country have always a brilliancy which captivates the world, and man is so desirous to immortalize a few syllables, which he calls his name, that we wish in general to see our ancestors act a dubious if not a culpable part, rather than not to see them on a stage so elevated and honourable.

Criticism on Poggio's Works.

Poggio had a vein of humour, which produced some well-known pleasantries. His tales have been often printed under the title of "Facetiæ," and translated into French by an Augustine monk and a Protestant divine. The two Communions have nothing therefore to reproach each other, but the Ecclesiastics have exercised their religious scruples too much upon the work, and have lopped off so much of its wit, as scarcely to leave any of it remaining. It might be wished they had not used their pruning knife so

so very liberally, though it must be allowed that the branches were indecently luxuriant. Instead of those levities which create a playful smile or a delicate sensation of gaiety, vice stares us in the face, and discovers its disgusting visage in all its genuine deformity.

Many letters of Poggio, and his Treatise on the Vicissitudes of Fortune, a curious work, were published by the liberality of the late Cardinal de Rohan from a manuscript in the possession of Cardinal Ottoboni, and Italy in all probability contains many of his other writings. A letter of Poggio (*b*) during the Council of Constance became

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(*b*) " Quum Constantiam revertissem, paucis post diebus cœpta est agi causa Hieronymi, quem hæreticum ferunt, et quidem publicè. Hanc vero tibi recensere institui, tum propter rei gravitatem, tum maximè propter eloquentiam hominis et doctrinam. Fateor me neminem vidisse unquam, qui in causâ dicendâ, præsertim capitis, magis accederet ad facundiam priscorum, quos tantoperè admiramur. Mirum est vidisse quibus verbis, quâ facundiâ, quibus argumentis, quo vultu, quo ore, quâ fiduciâ responderit adversariis, ac demum causam perorarit, ut dolendum sit tam nobile ingenium, tam excellens, ad illa hæresis studia divertisse; si tamen vera sunt quæ sibi objiciuntur. Non enim meum est tantam rem judicare. Acquiesco eorum sententiæ qui sapientiores habentur. ——

In concionem deductus, cum juberetur ad objecta respondere, diutius recusavit, asserens se debere prius causam suam agere, quam respondere maledictis adversariorum; itaque se prius pro se dicentem audiendum esse asserebat, quam ad æmulorum suorum probra in eum congesta veniendum. Sed cum hæc conditio sibi denegaretur, tunc stans in medio concionis; Quænam est hæc iniquitas, inquit, ut cum trecentis quadraginta diebus, quibus in diversissimis carceribus sui in squalore, in stercore, in compedibus, in rerum omnium inopiâ, adversarios atque obtrectatores meos semper audiretis, me unam horam nolitis audire? Hinc est ut cum illis singulorum aures patuerint, atque in tam longo tempore vobis persuaserint, me hæreticum, hostem fidei, ecclesiasticorum persecutorem, mihi autem me defendendi nulla detur facultas, vos

came unfortunately public contrary to his intentions, and was near bringing him into a very dangerous situation. He

vos prius mentibus vestris, me tanquam improbum hominem judicaveritis, quam qui fuerim potueritis cognoscere. Atqui, inquit, homines estis, non dii, non perpetui sed mortales, labi, errare, falli, decipi, seduci potestis. Hic mundi lumina, hic orbis terrarum prudentiores esse dicuntur, maximè decet vos laborare, ne quid temerè, ne quid insulsè, ne quid præter justitiam faciatis. Ego quidem homuncio sum, cujus de capite agitur. Nec pro me hæc loquor qui mortalis existo, verum indignum mihi videtur, sapientiam tot virorum aliquid adversum me statuere præter æquitatem, non tantum re quantum exemplo nociturum. ——— Nihil unquam protulit indignum bono viro, ut si id in fide sentiebat, quod verbis profitebatur, nulla in eum, nedum mortis causa inveniri justa posset, sed ne quidem levissimæ offensionis. Omnia falsa esse dicebat, omnia crimina conficta ab æmulis suis. Inter cætera cum recitaretur, illum Sedis Apostolicæ detractorem, oppugnatorem Pontificis, Cardinalium hostem, persecutorem Prælatorum, et Cleri Christianæ Religionis inimicum; tunc surgens querebundâ voce, manibus porrectis, quò nunc me vertam, inquit, Patres Conscripti? Quorum auxilium implorem? Quos deprecer? Quos obtester? Vos ne? At isti persecutores mei vestras mentes a meâ salute alienaverunt, cum universorum me hostem esse dixerunt eorum qui sunt judicaturi. Namque arbitrati sunt, si etiam ea quæ in me confinxerunt, levia viderentur, tamen vos vestris sententiis oppressuros communem omnium hostem atque oppugnatorem, qualem isti me esse falsissimè sunt mentiti. Ita si eorum verbis fidem dabitis, nihil est quod de meâ salute sperandum sit. ——— Cum omne causæ pondus in testibus situm esset, multis rationibus docuit, nullam his testibus fidem adhibendam, præsertim cum non ex veritate, sed ex odio, malevolentiâ et invidiâ omnia dixissent. Tum odii causas ita recitavit, ut haud procul fuerit a persuadendo. ——— Commotæ erant omnium mentes et ad misericordiam flectebantur. Addiderat enim se sponte venisse ad Concilium ad se purgandum; vitam suam et studia exposuerat officii plena et virtutis. ——— Expectabant omnes ut vel se purgaret retractando objecta, vel erratorum veniam postularet. At ille neque se errasse asseverans, neque se retractare velle aliorum crimina falsa, tandem descendit in laudationem Joannis Hus, ad ignem damnati, virum illum bonum, justum, et sanctum appellans et illa morte indignum, se quoque paratum quodvis supplicium adire forti animo ac constanti; seque inimicis suis cedere et testibus tam imprudenter mentientibus, qui tamen quandoque coram Deo quem fellere non poterant, essent rationem eorum quæ dixissent reddituri. ——— Hoc autem maximi ingenii fuit, cum interrumperetur sæpius oratio sua variis rumoribus, lacessereturque a nonnullis ejus sententias captantibus, neminem eorum intactum reliquit,

Character of Jerome of Prague.

He laments in it the misfortune that such a genius as Jerome should have wandered from the faith, if he had wandered from it, which was a question too difficult for him to decide; he acknowledges that his speech to the Council had a glow of eloquence that was not to be equalled but by the ancient orators; and he concludes with some pathetic observations on the cruelty of the sentence and Jerome's strength of mind and resignation, in which he was, in his opinion, superior to even Socrates.—The concluding comparison is just. Socrates was in

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liquit, pariterque omnes ulciscens, vel erubescere coëgit vel tacere. Surgente murmure silebat, orans atque obtestans ut eum loqui paterentur, cum se non essent amplius audituri. Nunquam ad hos rumores expavit, mente firmâ atque intrepidâ, &c. &c. —— Vox ejus suavis, aperta, resonans erat quadam cum dignitate oratorum gestus, vel ad indignationem exprimendam, vel ad commovendam commiserationem, quam tamen neque postulabat, neque consequi cupiebat. Stabat impavidus, mortem non contemnens solum, sed appetens, ut alterum Catonem dixisses. O virum dignum memoriâ hominum sempiternâ! &c. —— Per Concilium hæresis damnatus est, et igne combustus. Jocundâ fronte et alacri vultu ad exitum suum accessit; non ignem expavit, non tormenti genus, non mortis. Nullus unquam Stoicorum tam constanti animo, tam forti mortem perpessus, quam iste appetisse videtur. Cum venisset ad locum mortis, se ipsum exuit vestimentis. Tum procumbens flexis genibus veneratus palum ad quem ligatus fuit. Primùm funibus madentibus, cum catenâ nudus ad palum constrictus fuit. Ligna deinde circumposita pectotenus non minuscula, sed grossa paleis interjectis. Tum flammâ adhibitâ, canere cœpit hymnum quendam, quem fumus et ignis vix interrupit. Hoc maximum constantis animi signum, cum lictor ignem post tergum, ne id videret, injicere vellet. Huc inquit accede, et in conspectu accende ignem. Si enim illum timuissem, nunquam ad hunc locum, quem fugiendi facultas erat, accessissem. Hoc modo vir præter fidem egregius est consumptus. Vidi hunc exitum, singulos actus inspexi. —— Longam tibi cantilenam narravi, otii causâ nihil agens, aliquid agere volui, et res tibi narrare paulum similes historiis priscorum. Nam neque Mutius ille tam fidenti animo passus est membrum uri, quam iste universum corpus. Neque Socrates tam sponte venenum bibit, sicut iste ignem suscepit, &c. &c.

in fact condemned like John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who had also drawn down upon themselves the envy of the Priests and Sophists of their time. Yet the Areopagus and the Council of Constance had not the least resemblance, and in the sentence what is the difference! A cup of hemlock, unattended with any horrible or infamous appearance, brings on the death of the Grecian sage amidst his friends, and opens to old age a passage a few days earlier to immortality!—Fire and blazing faggots, the types of eternal tortures, were the punishment the ministers of peace and charity decreed against their brethren of as enlightened understandings, morality, and virtue!

Poggio was intimately connected with Cosmo de' Medici, introduced him into some of his dialogues, and dedicated to him his Version of Lucian's Ass, a number of letters, and an Eulogy of Rural Life. His journey into Germany is an era of some importance to the republic of letters on account of his discoveries. The Abbey de St. Gall in Swisserland had been for many years the residence, or rather the dormitory of the Muses. Exclusive of the Gazette in verse of Silius Italicus, and Columella, the most considerable work of the Ancients on agriculture, Poggio dragged out of the dust a large fragment of Lucretius, and Cicero's Orations for Cæcina, against the Agrarian Law, against Lucius Piso, for Rabirius, and Roscius the Comedian. Leonardo Aretino received

ceived the news of another discovery of Poggio with transport, and every reader of taste will be pleased with the warmth of his expressions.

"Quintilianus prius lacer atque discerptus cuncta "membra sua per te recuperavit. Vidi enim capita li-"brorum, totus est, cum vix nobis media pars et ea ip-"sa lacera superesset. O lucrum ingens! O insperatum "gaudium! Ego te, O Marce Fabi, totum integrum-"que aspiciam! et quanti tu mihi nunc eris, quem ego "quamvis

"· · · · · · · · · · lacerum crudeliter ora,
"Ora manusque ambas, populataque tempora raptis,
"Auribus, et truncas inhonesto vulnere nares,

"tamen propter decorem tuum in deliciis habebam. Oro "te Poggi, fac me quam cito hujus desiderii compotem, "ut si quid humanitus impendeat, hunc prius viderim "quam e vitâ decedam. —— Quinctilianus Rhetoricæ "pater et oratoriæ magister ejusmodi est, ut cum tu il-"lum, diuturno ac ferreo barbarorum carcere liberatum "huc miseris, omnes Etruriæ populi gratulatum concur-"rere debeant, &c. &c."

The dispute between Poggio and Laurentius Valla, a learned Roman, and one of the ancestors of Pietro della Valle,

"Qui

"Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes,"

was pushed on both sides to a scandalous excess. Erasmus, prejudiced in favour of Valle, has passed an injurious sentence on Poggio, and his reflections are inexcusable, even if they were true (*a*).

Ser. Brunetti Latini, Salutati, Bruni, Marsupini, and Poggio, all men of letters and secretaries of the Florentine republic, are strongly characterized by one of their cotemporary authors. "Commendanda est multis in "rebus Florentinorum prudentia, tum maximè quod in "legendis Cancellariis, non juris scientiam, ut pleræque "civitates, sed oratoriam spectant, et quæ vocantur hu-"manitatis studia. Norunt enim rectè dicendi scribendi-"que artem, non Bartholum aut Innocentium, sed Tul-"lium, Quinctilianumque tradere (*b*)."

One of the most learned Florentines of the fifteenth century, Ambrogio de Camaldules, who took the name from being General of the Order, was also a disciple of Chrysoloras, and deeply concerned in the pretended re-union

Ambrogio de Camaldules.

(*a*) "Valla Poggio centuplo doctior. —— Poggius rabula adeo indoctus, ut etiamsi vacaret obscœnitate, tamen indignus esset qui legeretur; adeo autem obscœnus, ut etiamsi doctissimus fuisset, tamen esset a bonis viris rejiciendus."

(*b*) Æneas Sylvius.

union of the Greek and Roman churches. He translated Diogenes Laertius, and many of his letters were collected in a volume by his great friend Cosmo de' Medici, and are still preserved in manuscript. According to Paulus Iovius, he had the rare happiness of possessing a lively imagination with a due sense of religion, and whilst he sacrificed to gaiety, his virtue and morality were unsullied.

His visitation of the Italian convents.

The HODÆPORICON, or the journal of his visitation of the convents in Italy, is full of curious particulars. It was not published till two centuries after his death, and we may gather from it, that the religious establishments were then almost as corrupt as they could be, and that Ambrogio's integrity was unquestionable. The narrative of his adventures is written in Latin, and the little foibles that he met with are honestly related in it, but the grosser offences, and crimes, that were not fit for the public eye, were concealed in a Greek disguise. Sometimes he only gives a general idea by the "Percepimus "prostibulum illud esse;" "Deprehendimus rem opini-"one deteriorem;" and in one or two instances, where the Religious sisters lived in a state of innocence, he cried out, "Happy Garden, where the voice of the tempter "has not yet been heard!" For one or two of this description there were twenty where he has applied to the frail community the "Πορναι," "Παλλακεια," "Ἑταιραι."

The

The male convents were still more disorderly, and he enters into many shocking details of their profligacy, and the "Των Νεων Συνουσιας." Far from living in "That peace "which passeth all understanding," these holy monks knocked each others heads against the walls of their cells, and fought with the strings of their beads, their staffs, and their crucifixes. Camaldules, like another Ezekiel, pierced through the wall of the tabernacle, and saw the abomination of the house of Israel. Something may be allowed for prejudice, and if Ambrogio had been under its influence, his own experience must have, notwithstanding, taught him how little is to be gained, and how much is to be lost, by a violation of the first, and most imperious law of nature.

Pliny speaks of a treatise on the Roman magistrates, by Lucius Fenestrella, in the time of Tiberius. An excellent work, under the same title, has been more than once printed, and ridiculously attributed to this ancient writer, though it has a multitude of modern allusions. It had Domenico Fiacci a Florentine, and another scholar of Chrysoloras for its author.

Gino Capponi, the conqueror of Pisa, his son Neri Capponi, (the great friend and rival of Cosmo de' Medici), and Matteo Palmieri, are also to be classed amongst the Florentine historians. With the addition of Tomaso de Sarzano, Rafaello Volterrano, Filelfo, and Æneas Sylvius, Tomaso de Sarzano.

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Sylvius to the illustrious natives of Florence and Arezzo, that have been mentioned, the collection of the principal Tuscan scholars, who studied in the Greek school, will be then complete. The little town of Sarzano belongs at present to the Genoese republic, but in the fifteenth century it was a part of the Florentine dominions, and Tomaso de Sarzano is, for this reason, reckoned a Tuscan, though Dempster (*c*) informs us he was born at Pisa. His early days were passed in the obscure and laborious office of a school-master; he next went as a preceptor into the Albizzi family, and was afterwards the immortal Nicholas the Vth, an honour to the Priesthood, a model for every Sovereign, and one of the most illustrious Pontiffs that have ever filled the Papal Chair. By the single and unsupported force of his own talents, by the power of his own commanding virtues, he raised himself from his humble station to the highest summit of human grandeur. The Vatican library was founded by him; arts were protected; letters, and merit of every kind rewarded; in every respect he equalled Cosmo de' Medici; and their memories have been treated with the same veneration by a grateful people.

Rafaello Volterrano.

Rafaello Volterrano, originally of the Florentine city of Volterra, was a person of immense, but ill-digested, learning,

(*c*) "Nic. V. non fuit Sarzanensis, ut plerique falsò prodiderunt, sed ortu ac majoribus, adeoque patre et matre Pisanus." *Hetr. Reg. t.* 2. *p.* 261.

learning, and had not received from Nature either genius or judgment, in any sense, proportionate to the knowledge he acquired by the dint of application and of study. In his works we must expect to find much chaff as well as grain; and as he collected every thing with avidity, but without discernment, he has formed an immense repertory (*d*), which may be always consulted with advantage. Its principal defect is in the table of its contents, where it is very faulty.

Francesco Filelfo.

Francesco Filelfo, born at Tolentino, of a Florentine family, was principally known for his astonishing fecundity of genius in every thing he undertook (*e*). In his letters he discovers to us his natural disposition, sound morality, and a degree of learning as multiplied as the times admitted. His orations are less valuable; they have more learning than eloquence, are spun out, and abundantly too long. With him "The plenitude" of ideas does not correspond with "The plenitude" of words.

(*d*) "Vir infinitæ propè lectionis, quippe qui disciplinas omnes in acervum conjecerit, utili potius in alienâ desidiâ, quàm ad explicatæ doctrinæ decus nobili opere. Non multo enim cum sale, et sine ornamento latinæ orationis, cuncta astricto ordine ita digessit, ut alibi quærenda legentibus indicare videatur."

Paul. Iov.

(*e*) "Quod nemini unquam Latinorum contigit, institui nullum esse orationis genus quod intentatum reliquerim. Quare cum pleraque et versu et prosâ Latinè scripserim, non oratorio et poëtico modo duntaxat, sed etiam philosophico, idem nunc Græcè præstare animum induxi —— absolvi jam versibus decem millibus Satyrarum opus, &c." *Epist. Phil.*

words. Whatever esteem might be due to his talents, for his temper little can be said. He was restless, covetous, vindictive, and full of vanity and absurdity. The partisans of Albizzi brought him first to Florence, but Cosmo de' Medici courted him on his arrival by every advance, and every civility. The generous friend of letters paid him immediately a visit, and assured him he might depend on his patronage and protection, provided, on his part, he might rely on his sincerity (*f*). His unbounded vanity, however, exposed him to much ridicule.

Studying with wonderful perseverance, and attaching the most absurd importance to his most trifling productions, the moment they were finished he expected the public to be wholly engrossed with them. From this foolish opinion of his own abilities he frequently exposed himself, and became the trumpeter of his own fancied reputation. "Universa," says he, "in me civitas Florentina conversa est. Omnes me diligunt, honorant omnes, ac summis laudibus in cœlum efferunt. Meum "nomen

(*f*) "Cosmus Medices, ut humanitatis plurimum præ se fert, adiit me perhumanè, nec id semel, sed iterum atque iterum, dixitque si quâ mihi in re opus foret operâ suâ, sese mihi defuturum nunquam, &c." *Ep. Phil.*

"Cum primum Florentiam veni, non expectasti tu, tantis opibus, tantâ amplitudine vir, ut te et juvenis, et peregrinus, et paucis admodum cognitus, adirem prius, ut par esse censebam, idque facere institueram, sed antevertens pro tuâ singulari modestiâ perbenignè me adiisti, nullumque prætermisisti munus beneficentissimi viri." *Ex Epist. ejusd. ad Cosm. Med.*

"nomen in ore est omnibus. Nec primarii cives modo, "cum per urbem incedo, sed ipsæ etiam nobilissimæ fœ- "minæ honorandi mei gratiâ locum cedunt.—Si lapides "ipsi loqui possent, omnes in meas laudes linguas solve- "rent.—Mihi libris opus non est, nam satis mihi libro- "rum in me ipso (*g*)." And he repeats with the same ostentation, that the winds brought him scholars, "A "Gadibus usque et Cypro, et ab ultimis Galliæ et Ger- "maniæ populis."

The good understanding between Filelfo and Cosmo de' Medici was not of long continuance; and on Cosmo's restoration, Filelfo, from fears, as he said, of his personal safety, quitted Florence (*h*)." Their enmity increased, and Cosmo, finding even that appearances were not to be kept up with one who outraged all his feelings, included him in the list of the proscribed. A torrent of the most abusive virulence was then poured upon Cosmo, and, to satiate his resentment, Filelfo descended so far as to charge him with the most horrid and improbable crimes, having only disguised his name under that of Mundus in his libel. Few persons will now travel through ten thousand Latin verses in search of the invective, and a specimen of it is here exhibited:

"Turpis

(*g*) *Epist. Philelph.*

(*h*) "Ac feci id tempestivè, nam si ad reditum Cosmi Medices in tantâ gladiorum impunitate, Florentiæ remansissem, actum esset de Musis et de Philelpho, &c." *Ep. Phil.*

"Turpis et impurus qui conjugis intima profert,
Quæque pudicitiæ debentur claustra sacello
Proscribit, floremque suæ dat conjugis auro.
Dicam, Pontifici quis vendidit ære Joanni,
Primâ nocte thorum, sobolemque e sanguine sacro
Partam, nondum leno suam appellare rubescat,
Famoso illustris damnatus crimine furti (*i*)."

John the XXIIIrd, the Pope alluded to, was undoubtedly very intimate with Cosmo de' Medici, who afterwards erected to him a very sumptuous mausoleum, and inherited his whole fortune. The manners of the Roman Pontiff, it must also be acknowledged, were scandalously irregular; and dearly as he had purchased his Cardinal's Hat, his mistress Catherine, whom he had seduced from her husband, stamped his character with more lasting ignominy. Yet it is not possible to suppose with Filelfo, that Cosmo de' Medici had made an infamous traffic of the rights of his nuptial bed, and degraded himself to such a shameful excess as

"——— doctus spectare lacunar,
Doctus et ad calicem vigilanti stertere naso (*k*)."

Invectives of this flagitious nature miss their aim, and rebound with double violence on the hand that launched them.

After

(*i*) *Satyræ Philelph.*

(*k*) *Juvenalis Satyr.* 1.—56, 57.

After the ill success which attended every attempt of the exiles and the proscribed against Cosmo's administration, Filelfo changed his tone, appeared to be sensible of his misbehaviour (*a*), and made some efforts both to regain Cosmo's favour, and to obtain his recall, though he returned only to Florence after Cosmo's death. He had married Theodora Chrysolorina, a grand-daughter of Chrysoloras, in the words of Paulus Iovius, "Ut de "Caballino fonte potaret." Her beauty, her birth, her fortune, made her a very desirable partner for life; but what principally determined Filelfo in his choice, was the hope of acquiring, by her means, all the delicacy and purity of the Greek language, with its most perfect pronunciation. Nor was he disappointed. His plan succeeded to the utmost of his wishes, and he owed all his future progress in the language to her conversation, delivered in the purest dialect of Attica (*b*). If we are to believe

(*a*) "Cum mea lego, et me ipsum considero, non possum non erubescere, metuens ne vituperentur in me, quæ aliis scriptoribus dederim vitio. Non enim quæ in aliis jure etiam carpimus nota sunt omnibus; at oratio nostra occulta esse non potest. Non modo me Sallustius iis non delectat quæ scripsit in M. Tullium Ciceronem, nec item omnino quæ Cicero in Antonium, aut in Timarchum Philippumque Demosthenes, sed etiam vir sanctissimus ac disertissimus Hieronymus non sine molestiâ a me legitur cum invehitur in Rufinum. ——— Præstat illud semper ante oculos observari, Mihi vindicta et ego retribuam." *Ep. Phil.*

(*b*) "Theodora locutione erat admodum moderata et maximè Atticâ, utpote quæ nihil haberet peregrini ineptique sermonis admixtum. Nam quoniam illæ mulieres nobiles Constantinopolitanæ pro vetere quodam more se domi continerent ——— ob hujusmodi solitudinem, antiquitatem illæ observabant incorrupti sermonis." *Ep. Phil.*

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believe, Poggio, the author of four furious invectives against Filelfo, even this marriage was occasioned by crimes which should have stained his face with an everlasting blush. Filelfo, he pretends, was received into the house of John Chrysoloras at Constantinople, where he violated, in the seduction of Chrysolorina, the sacred rights of hospitality; and the unhappy father was obliged to give his daughter, for whom he had many advantageous and honourable offers, to the insinuating adventurer (*c*). Here Poggio retorts upon Filelfo, in the most atrocious

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(*c*) " Callidè et consulto rem alteri opponis quæ nequeat in te reflecti. Puerorum enim atque adolescentum amores nefandissimos sectaris, non mulierum. Neque tu unquam mulierem cognosti, nisi eam quam malè primo sumptam, postmodo pejus receptam pessimè tractasti. ——— Mulieris stuprum tibi inussit maculam sceleris sempiternam. An oblitus eam quam habes uxorem quibus artibus, quâ perfidiâ fueris potitus. Ne nos solos ignaros putes rei omnibus notissimæ, recognosce flagitia manifesta, in quibus nulla erit tergiversandi aut dissimulandi facultas. ——— Pulsus olim Patavio turpiter, &c. Constantinopolim tanquam in asylum, egenus atque inops confugisti. Callidè id quidem et astutè, ut ad ea loca adires ad quæ citius autor quam fama scelerum perveniret. Ibi in Joannis Chrysoloræ doctissimi atque insignis equitis familiaritatem, discendi cupiditatem præ te ferens temet insinuasti. Qui tuâ verbositate motus, simul mendacitate commotus (nihil enim eò præter linguam inanem et cutem aridam deportaras) te domi suæ recepit, ignarus futuri: hospitem enim pudicum, non Paridem adulterum se recepturum putabat. At tu, cum regiones non mores immutasses, ne quis locus esset vacuus sceleribus tuis, ejus virginem filiam stuprasti, tuis pollicitationibus et blanditiis deceptam. Cum te ille miser, qui serpentem domi nutrierat, mœchum filiæ deprehendisset, de te interficiendo consilium cepit, cum tu aufugisses supplicii metu. Sed quid ageret vir licet prudens? Inops consilii erat, scelus detectum, virgo compressa, dos amissa virginitatis. Intercedunt Italici mercatores, consulunt ut eam despondeat, hoc maximè pacto obumbrari putantes turpitudinem susceptam. Itaque Chrysoloras mœrore confectus, compulsus precibus, malo coactus, filiam tibi nuptui dedit, a te corruptam, quæ si extitisset integra, ne pilum quidem tibi abrasum ab illius . . . . ostendisset. An tu illam unquam duxisses uxorem, si virginitatem per te servare po-

atrocious manner, his insolent abuse of Cosmo de' Medici (*d*), but his accusations should be read with caution. If the Florentine Secretary were to be believed, Filelfo must have been a monster, and his malignity betrays itself almost in every sentence (*e*). Filelfo replied to him with the same acrimony, and yet, such was the comedy, that these two savage disputants were afterwards reconciled, and lived as friends.

Pantea, Senofonte, and Sciro, the daughter, the son, and

tuisset? Tibi pater illam dedisset profuge, ignobilis, impure? Primariis suæ civitatis viris servabatur virgo, non tibi insulsæ pecudi et asello bipedali. ——— Ille nobilis, tu rusticanus, ille dives, tu mendicus, ille civis, tu peregrinus, ille doctus, tu rerum omnium præterquam libidinis ignarus, &c. &c."

Poggii Invect. 1. *in Philelph.*

(*d*) "Unâ in re cautior quam cæteri, uxoris tuæ, bonæ quidem fœminæ, si per te licuisset, egestati consuluisti. ——— Pusionem quem amabas in hac urbe, inter te et uxorem in eodem lecto sæpius collocasti. Nam cum mulier viduitatem viventis mariti non posset ferre, adolescenti vero tua barbula displiceret, uxoris voluptati et adolescentis libidini satisfacere voluisti, ut et illius miseræ dolorem lenires, et adolescentem meretricio amore pellectum detineres. Quâ quidem in re laudo primum pietatem tuam, deinde prudentiam, &c." *Id. ibid.*

(*e*) "Monstrum omnium teterrimum ——— spurcissimus omnium quos nostra ætas tulit ——— hujus ætatis pestis nefaria ——— homo ad mentiendum natus, alitus, edoctus ——— discipulorum suorum maritus. ——— Felix quidem ille dies Florentinæ urbi illuxit, cum te veluti morbidam pecudem expulit e mœnibus suis. ——— Dedecus præsentis sæculi ——— abjectum animal. ——— O execrabile gentium omnium portentum! ——— O monstrum exitiabile, et ad ultimas terras deportandum! ——— O hirce fœtide! O fœtide corniger! O infelix portentum! ——— O pestis! O furia, scelesta bellua, &c. ——— Stigmatice prædo ——— crux tibi debita te expectat, &c. &c." *Id. ibid. passim.*

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and grandson of Filelfo, had likewise the credit of some literary merit.

Æneas Sylvius

Æneas Sylvius was of the Sienna Piccoluomini family, and Secretary of the Council of Basle, of which he published a relation. This Council found an able advocate in him against the pretensions of the Church of Rome, and he was not a less intrepid partisan than John Gerson, for the superiority of the Councils over the Roman Pontiffs. Æneas Sylvius lived to be a Cardinal and Pope, under the name of Pius the IId, when things appeared to him under a very different aspect. Dissatisfied, or pretending to be dissatisfied, with the tenets he had formerly defended, he made many vain efforts to suppress what he had written, and we are referred by several authors to his expression: "Æneam rejicite, Pium audite." It may be met with in his works, but it relates to some verses of galantry, which escaped from him in his youth, and notwithstanding all his endeavours continued to be read and admired. Pius the IId, also retracted his former sentiments in favour of Councils by a formal Bull, though in the very retractation he acknowledges he had defended an ancient doctrine, by the "Tuebamur antiquam sententiam." Was this indiscretion, or was it candour? For, according to the principles of the Church of Rome, to acknowledge that a dogma of religion has not always been believed, is to acknowledge that it is false.

The

The famous letter of the Roman Pontiff to the Sultan Mahomet, is a piece singular in its kind, but of an enormous length. It enters with great prolixity into the superior advantage which the Christian faith possesses over the Creed of Mahomet, and endeavours to prevail on the descendant of the impostor by great examples and powerful motives. It would be too tedious to introduce the whole, yet it is so full of many curious incidents, that a copious extract may be very pardonable.

His famous letter to the Sultan Mahomet.

" Receive my letter, I beseech you, with temper, and " read the whole of it with candour. If you find in it any " thing that may be of service to you, profit by it: if " there is nothing useful, let it perish in the flames. Do " not, however, take the latter step, merely because it " comes from a Christian, and the Head of the Christians. I have neither any enmity to you, nor am I " concerned in any insidious enterprise against you. My " religion commands me to love my enemies, and to pray " for my persecutors; and I am anxious for the safety " and happiness of all mankind. Greeks and Latins, " Jews and Mahometans, are all dear to me, and I wish " them every happiness. But true happiness can never " be the lot of those who are strangers to our Lord and " Saviour Jesus Christ!—Let not the name of Christ offend your ears! Your own Law declares him to be a " Holy Person, and a Great Prophet; and that he was

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"the only Son of a Virgin, and worked the greatest miracles (*f*).—Embrace his Gospel, and you will receive "from him a thousand temporal advantages. Perhaps a "proposition made so abruptly to you, may disgust you, "but do not at once condemn it without considering its "intention.—Your ancestors have waged many bloody "wars against us, and they burnt our towns and temples. "If we are to give credit to public rumour, you are as "anxious to reduce all Christendom under your yoke. "Flatterers may insinuate to you, perhaps, the facility "of such a conquest; but your Highness has too much "understanding to believe them merely from such insinuations. You are not ignorant of the powerful resources of Christendom, and that Spain, France, Germany, Britain, Hungary, Poland, and Italy, are inhabited by numerous, opulent, and courageous nations. "Embrace the Gospel; believe in Christianity. I will "immediately confer on you the title of the Emperor of "the East; and what you now pretend to, you will then "be legally entitled to. You will be my dearly-beloved "son, and I shall have the same paternal affection for "you

(*f*) "Certum est Mahumetanos universaliter Christi divinitatem negare. Sed hic solum addo, Hajetenses, et Hademienses, quorum alteri Ahmedum, filium Hajeti; alteri Phadelum filium Hademi, celeberrimos inter Mohtazelitas et discipulos Nadhami sectabantur, Christo divinitatem constanter asseruisse; affirmantes præterea illum in die judicii creaturas omnes esse judicaturum."

Lud. Maraccius, in Refutat. in Suram 5. Alcorani §. 7.

" you that I have for the other Christian Potentates. My " charity will even be proportioned to your elevation. " Your own States contain many Christians, who wish to " overturn your government because you are not your- " self a Christian. They regularly make their complaints " to me, and are ready to suffer every extremity rather " than continue in subjection to an infidel. Sometimes " I assist them with provisions, and with money; but the " moment you become a Christian, and have received the " sacrament of regeneration, they will cease to consider " you as a tyrant, and I shall withdraw from them my " protection.—To what a happy state do I look forward! " What the Poets called the Golden Age will again ap- " pear upon the Earth; lambs will feed with wolves, and " the child shall play with the snake. Receive our bap- " tism, and Turkey, Syria, Arabia, and Lybia, will not " lose a moment in following the example. If Egypt " hesitated, the Abyssinians, already Christians, have " only to turn the Nile. One single act of your power " will bring the whole East to Christ.—Great enterprises " are always attended with some danger, and have occa- " sion for much care and diligence. Sound, and endea- " vour to penetrate into the views of your ministers. " Employ, as much as possible, those only on whose pru- " dence and fidelity you can rely. Beware of precipi- " tating any thing, or compromising yourself. The more " you reflect on your operations, the more they are likely " to be successful; but manage your affairs in such a " manner,

CHAP. III. "manner, that every thing may be ready the instant you "declare yourself (*g*)."

This letter, it is well known, produced no effect upon the Sultan. The evangelical seed could not vegetate in such a rocky soil; and, without a miracle, Mahomet's conversion could not have been expected from such a correspondence. The power of the pen makes but a feeble opposition to the sword; and a promise of the subjection of the world was not certainly a very apostolical mode of argument. Some persons have been of opinion,

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(*g*) "Hortamur ut benignè audias verba nostra, nec prius damnes quam judices, nec prius judices quam singula diligenter intelligas. Accipe quæ scribimus in bonam partem et usque in finem patienter audi. Si bona sunt quæ suademus amplectere, sin mala respue et in ignem mitte. Neque idcirco epistolam rejicias, quod Christiani hominis est, et ejus Christiani qui cæteris præest. Non enim te odio persequimur —— neque tuo insidiamur capiti, quamvis nostræ religionis hostis existas, et armis Christianam urgeas plebem, &c. —— Diligimus jubente Domino inimicos nostros, pro persecutoribus nostris oramus. Sapientibus et insipientibus debitores sumus, et omnes cupimus fieri salvos, Græcos, Latinos, Judæos, Saracenos, omnibus optamus bona. Sed scimus vera bona neminem assequi posse, qui extra Evangelium degit, et a Christo domino nostro est alienus. Noli autem aures claudere aut oculos avertere, quum Christum nominamus, quem Mahometea lex, in quâ natus es, virum sanctum et prophetam magnum et virginis filium et miraculis clarum dicit. Multa tibi per eum et maxima advenient, si ei credideris —— Horresces hæc cum principio accipies. —— Audi quò tendimus. Multa tibi et tuis progenitoribus cum Christianis bella fuerunt. Multus sanguis effusus est, multæ urbes deletæ, sacræ ædes, &c. &c. —— Tibi, ut fama et opera ipsa loquuntur, ingens desiderium est Christianos sub jugum mittere, et imperium Latini nominis obtinere. Et sunt fortassè qui hoc facile suadent et omnia tuis armis pervia dicunt, &c. &c. &c." *Epist. Æneæ Sylvii*, No. 410.

Monsr. Tenhove had extended his translation to an immense length. It is now curtailed, and resembles more the original.

opinion, that the letter was never intended to be sent to Mahomet, and was only meant as a species of manifesto, to stimulate the Christian world to arms, on a conviction that their Holy Father had done every thing in his power to pacify the Sultan by negociation. Yet, under this impression, it contains many obnoxious passages both to the Eastern and Western Christians, and in particular to the German Emperor, and some other Sovereigns.—In another sense, the hope of Mahomet's conversion appears perfectly ridiculous and romantic, and perhaps it may be best to suspend our judgment on the point. Pius the IId, whatever were his views, and whether he was disappointed in his attempt to convert the Sultan, or never cherished such a foolish expectation, turned his whole thoughts afterwards to arms; and, from this circumstance, his Pontificate was less advantageous to letters, and the arts and sciences, than it promised. Full of the projected crusade, he wearied himself in preparations for its success, heaped up wealth, and, unlike the Medici family, neglected learning and talents of every kind.

Whilst the Council of Florence was employed in theological disputes "on the Holy Ghost proceeding "from the Father and the Son, by the production "of inspiration; on the Father communicating every "thing to the Son, excepting his paternity; and on "the Son having had a productive virtue from all "eternity," which engaged the attention of the scholars

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lars of the age, Cosmo de' Medici listened with pleasure to Gemisthus Pletho, of whom so much has been already said. Whether he had been able, in his dissertations on the mysteries of Plato, to conceal from the piercing eyes of Cosmo those dangerous novelties, of which the Patriarch Gennadius accused him after his death; whether these imputations were magnified, or were but calumnies, or whether Cosmo, the friend of genius, was not sufficiently on his guard against them, he entered into them with so much warmth, that he formed the design of a Platonic Academy. Things were not however quite ripe for such an establishment, and the execution of the project was reserved for one of his descendants.

Marsilio Ficino.

The young Marsilio Ficino, a son of Cosmo's physician, was to have presided at this academy, and amongst all the illustrious scholars under Cosmo's patronage, perhaps this celebrated restorer of the Platonic philosophy deserves to be first mentioned.—Medici gave him apartments in his villa at Carreggi, and afforded him that happy leisure so necessary for his sublime speculations (*a*). Complete translations of Iamblicus, Plotinus, Porphyry, Hierocles, Trismegisthus, Alcinous, Denis the

(*a*) "Bacchus quasi geminas matres habuisse fertur. Melchisedec autem summus ille sacerdos unam vix matrem, unum vix patrem habuit. Ego sacerdos minimus patres habui duos, Ficinum medicum, Cosmum Medicen. Ex illo natus sum, ex isto renatus." *Mars. Fic. de Tripl. Vita in Proœm.*

the Areopagite, and lastly of Plato, were the fruits of his learned evenings, and they form an important epoch in the history of philosophy. The Greeks, who landed in Italy before the conquest of their own country, and those that followed them on its conquest, had been equally divided between the sects of Aristotle and Plato; but with us in the West, the case was widely different. Aristotle had reigned without a rival, and his sect, like the Rod of Moses, had swallowed up every other.—The time was at last arrived when the power of this philosophical tyrant was to cease, and his long possession of the schools was to be interrupted. By a singular destiny this great man, born for the advancement of human knowledge, had been the greatest obstacle to its progress. The paradox may appear extraordinary, but the fact is true and appears to have been owing to the following causes.—The genius of Aristotle, not less impetuous than that of his pupil Alexander, attempted to master all nature by storm, and to soar immediately to first causes without stooping to any examination of their effects. His style was pithy, sententious, of an enigmatic cast, and peculiarly his own. One of the first axioms of his metaphysics, "He that wishes to instruct himself "must learn to doubt," has not the least appearance of the dogmatical or decisive tone, to which he afterwards had recourse, and in which he delivered his judgments and opinions. A blind partiality was attached to even his feeblest productions, his Logic and his Physicks, so much

Aristotle, and observations on his philosophy.

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much below his Rhetoric, his Art of Poetry, and his History of Animals, which are the pride of antiquity. With an inconceivable inconsistency he despised, or pretended to despise, mathematical studies, and endeavoured to represent them as destructive to the progress of reason, though he was not himself unacquainted with the science. His vast and capacious mind had embraced the whole expanse of knowledge, and his metaphysical writings are full of instances which belong to Geometry. They present also some traits of the two principal branches of mixed Mathematics, Optics, and Mechanics, but pure Mathematics, without being totally neglected in his schools, had little respect paid to them. To what was this strange inconsistency in such an unbounded genius to be attributed, except to a desire of singularity? —In general, the spirit of contradiction is the true key of many philosophical systems (*b*).

Aristotle's doctrines, in the shape under which they appeared in the Western world, were miserably depraved, and in all likelihood they would not have been acknowledged by him. Every thing was in fact taught, except

(*b*) "Aristoteles in Platone reprehendit quod nimio Geometriæ studio a solidè philosophandi ratione discedat longius. Cogniti mihi et auditi fuere summi Philosophi peripatetici, qui discipulos suos dehortati sunt a studio mathematicarum disciplinarum, utpote quæ reddant intellectum cavillationibus inhiantem, et ad benè philosophandum inhabilem. Quod institutum è diametro instituto Platonis adversatur, qui non admisit ad philosophiam, nisi Geometriæ exactissimè gnaros."

Galilæus, Dial. de Sist. mundi.

except his own dogmas. His writings, lost for a hundred years in heaps of rubbish, had emerged into daylight in a condition that might be easily imagined. Even his ancient disciples had made alterations in his works which did not always ameliorate them, and the Arabs, the conquerors of one part of the globe, having cultivated after some method or another the sciences in the barbarous ages, had chosen Aristotle for their philosophical guide, had translated, and made many comments on him. —They first carried his tenets to the banks of the Ganges, and then returned with them to us. In fact, Europe only became acquainted with Aristotle's works by the help of some paltry Latin versions from the Arabic Text and Glossaries, or rather from some Hebrew translations by Jews, for even as late as the seventeenth century scarce any had been made from the Arabic.

The Oriental language, rich as can be wished, and multiplied in such a manner, that we are told, its vocabulary would load sixty camels, is notwithstanding as defective as superfluous, and wholly improper to express the turns of the Greek tongue with its abstract ideas. It might be supposed, that the Chinese would be a language that might be employed with precision on real sciences, yet its weakness is apparent, for devoid of the rules of grammar and without a syntax, which have been invented to render other languages intelligible and clear, having only three tenses and less than two thousand

sand radical words, it is still under the necessity of having recourse to paraphrases without life or animation, and ends in embarrassing every thing so much, that by the neighbouring people it is called, the Language of Confusion.

Man, resuming the Arabs, in the Torrid Zone and more or less in all hot countries, has not that force of mind, by which the imagination can alone be regulated. The air of these sultry climates relaxes the fibres, lengthens them, and diminishes both their power and elasticity. He, that even wishes to be wise, overpowered by a petulant vivacity, cannot here submit to that steady and laborious exertion (*c*) of the understanding, which the study of philosophy requires. The lively spirits of the Arabian doctors, too much heated by the reflection of their burning sands, and sublimated by a fiery sun, cannot confine themselves within the circle of common sense, and plunging with impetuosity into every extravagance, disfigure the original of every thing they treat. In more temperate latitudes and a moister atmosphere the scholastic doctors indeed copied their absurdities and added to their errors. Some of them even went so far in follow-

(*c*) Sir John Chardin has made a like observation on the influence of climate. " La temperature des climate chauds enerve l'esprit comme le corps, et dissipe ce feu necessaire à l'imagination pour l'invention. On n'est capable dans ces climats-la de longues veilles et de cette forte application qui enfantent les ouvrages des Arts liberaux et des arts mechaniques." *Voyages de Chardin. c. 7.*

following the footsteps of Aben-Roschd or Averroes, as to lose themselves in the dreary regions of materialism. Their folly, however great or reprehensible as it might have been, destructive of all sound philosophy, and worthy of the contempt of the wise, is not perhaps, more absurd than the forlorn hope of uniting the Peripatetic system with Christianity.

Aristotle, far from admitting the creation of the world, believed it to be infinite and co-eternal with the Deity; and his doctrine respecting the "Primum Mobile," or First Moving Principle, destroyed the true distinction between the Creator and his creature.—Notwithstanding we read in the Treatise of the World, which perhaps is not Aristotle's, that the Divinity is in the world what the pilot is to the ship, or the charioteer upon his chariot, he confounds every idea of Providence. Alexander of Aphrodisum has beautifully said, "that to deny the Pro-" "vidence of God, was to deny the sweetness of honey," "the heat of fire, or that snow was white." In many passages, however, Aristotle appears expressly to deny the interference of Providence with sublunary things, and his principles are incapable of inspiring us with the precious belief of the immortality of the soul, at least his mode of thinking on the subject is very problematical.

Nothing of this sort could however stop the reasoners, who were determined whatever might be the consequence

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quence to amalgamate two doctrines evidently contradictory to each other. They looked for, and what was worse, they found according to their fancies, in the Grecian philosopher all the grand articles of Revelation, the most sacred mysteries not excepted; and they insisted, that he was the messenger of the Messiah in the natural world, as John the Baptist had been in that of Grace. This monstrous union, on which they applauded themselves, even served to sanctify their errors, and to have no faith in Aristotle, as they explained him, was to be a heretic. Yet their academies echoed but with occult qualities, substantial forms, entities, and modalities, and the Angels of the school were so far from being Angels of light, that their darkness was not even like Milton's,

"A Darkness visible."

Truth was not the object of their researches, whilst they busied themselves in acquiring the useless art of making objections, and replying to them in new terms, which they did not comprehend. Concealed in a thick mist, and entrenched behind a rampart of logic, they amused themselves with dividing the indivisible, with peremptory assertions, and they never doubted.

Amongst the number there might be a few persons of superior sagacity, and collectively speaking they were not all to be despised. Thomas D'Aquinas, the unfortunate

nate lover of Eloisa, Peter Lombard, the master of sentences, Alain d' Ile his commentator, and Albert the Grand, were not men of very common talents. Nature had been bountiful to Halkot and Sacrobosco, Scot was not a weak man nor Buridan a simpleton; but taking the whole together, Peripateticism became in their hands a confused mass of subterfuges, and minute scholastic distinctions, which dishonoured reason and disgraced the understanding.

Such was the deplorable state of philosophy, and the picture is not by any means overcharged, when Marsilio Ficino felt compassion for it, and undertook the task of reviving Plato, barely known by name; as the Arabs had neglected an author whose doctrines, founded on the mythology of his own country and dissolved with it, had shocked their religious prejudices. The remedy for one abuse is often the introduction of another; and it may be doubted whether the Florentine, by his version of Plato, did any service to philosophy. The writings indeed of this master of the Athenian school, are in general a tissue of beautiful chimeras, extracted rather from the ideas of Pythagoras, Archytas, Heraclitus, Timæus, Parmenides, and the Egyptian Priests, than of the Wisest of men.

Plato, and the Platonic philosophy.

His Archetypical ideas, his Androgynes, his refined system of love, the origin and descent of souls, which shoot from Heaven like stars; their transmigrations, their

their passage in the planets, when disembarrassed of their corporeal obstructions; his reminiscence, distinct from memory; his Trinity different to the Christian opinions; his word; his new republic; his strange physics; his vast cavern, where all the rivers have their source; his obscure notions on matter, which was a being, and was not; which was not a what, nor a where, nor great, nor little; which was nothing, and still existed. In short, all these singular ideas, so absurdly described, and sometimes attempted to be proved by the shallowest arguments, are at best but golden dreams, or the spider's web magnificently embroidered. Yet there is a mixture of sublimity and truth in the Athenian Philosopher; and in his wildest extravagance he was conducted by a sally of reason, which his scholars, more prejudiced, have been unable to conceal.

Independent of these circumstances, the disciple of Socrates had some advantages over Alexander's master. His modesty was a powerful recommendation in his favour. The character of the present age appears to lead us to direct scepticism, as suspension of belief on every subject is supposed to be the natural state of a rational understanding; and there is a pride in an avowal of that dangerous philosophy, which aims at the destruction of every thing, without being of any use or advantage to society. Mischievous as such tenets are, Plato's hesitation had its merit. On his guard against any rash and

hasty

hasty decisions, he had learned to doubt (*a*), and a calm discussion of contradictory arguments appeared to him the best method of discovering truth.

Arcesilaus, the founder of the middle academy, pushed the great principle of his master still further; and when he denied even probabilities, he differed from the Pyrrhonians but in name. Carneades, author of the new academy, and a determined defender of uncertainty, insensibly approached Plato in his allowance of the degrees of probability, by which a wise man should regulate his conduct. Whilst the succeeding schools continued faithful to the modesty of their founder, the presumptuous Lyceum adhered to its dogmatical tone, and insisted on an acquiescence to its dictates without any evidence whatever.

Plato, though a disciple and the successor of a master who had little value for the mathematics, had a different opinion of their use, and his prevailing taste prepossessed him in their favour. He clearly saw, that a study which extends the intellectual powers, habitually engages the attention, and renders precision both familiar and necessary,

(*a*) "In Platonis scriptis nihil affirmatur et in utramque partem multa disseruntur, de omnibus quæritur, nihil certi dicitur." *Cic. Ac. Quæst. l.* 1.

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cessary, would be an admirable preparative (*b*) for that of philosophy. Mathematics had a share in the motives of his travels, which he entered on, like the first Grecian sages, to improve himself; and when he afterwards founded his school, it had geometry for its basis. Not a day passed in which he did not explain to his disciples some new truth. The celebrated inscription at the entrance of his academy, in which every one ignorant of geometry was desired to stop at the door, is well known; and when he termed the Deity, "The Eternal Geometer!" he meant to indicate that the laws by which He governed the universe were reducible to mathematical principles. Geometry, therefore, has numerous obligations to Plato and his scholars; and the foundation of the academy is a memorable epoch in the mathematical annals, from the rapid progress of that science.

However flourishing the science might have been previously in Greece, Plato gave it new life and vigour, and in some measure changed its whole appearance. It had not till then occupied itself but with simple considerations; in the academy its infancy was at an end, and under its direction it began to exert its powers. Plato, however, does not appear to have written any treatise purely

(*b*) "Mathematicam Plato ad animi præparationem et emendationem intellectus circa idæas versaturi requirebat." *Brucker. Hist. Crit. Phil.*

purely mathematical; but a single invention, of which he is the reputed author, is more than equivalent to any composition. He first introduced the geometrical analysis, the only certain guide in mathematical questions of any difficulty; and it had the happiest effects in the perfection of geometry.

Another remarkable discovery due to the Platonic school was that of conic sections, the knowledge of which was carried very far. The geometrical leagues, and their application to the solution of indeterminate problems, were also first thought of in the bosom of the academy. About the time of Plato, the duplication of the cube acquired the credit it has since enjoyed; and it is very probable that the solution respecting the triple section of the angle, not less famous than the duplication of the cube, and the quadrature of the circle, had its origin in the Platonic school.

An academy in which geometry was so much honoured, could not fail to produce a number of great men in the science; and they started out of it like the Grecian heroes from the Trojan horse. Proclus has given a long list of them, and amongst the number Neocles, or Neoclides, Leo, Menechmus, Aristæus, and Euclid, were Platonicians. Mixed mathematics did not still advance proportionably with geometry. After the example of the master of the sect, the disciples applied themselves more

 more to abstract speculations than to the observation of nature, and the true principles of physico-mathematics.

Another advantage, though not an essential one, which Plato possessed over his rival, consisted in his style. Whilst his adversary was short, pithy, and dry, and addressed himself without ornament to the understanding, Plato, not satisfied with only convincing the mind, wished to captivate the heart. Reason and virtue were decked with every charm, the graces of his diction simple and natural, as well as, on some occasions, noble and sublime, entitled him to the name of Homer in Prose; and in the dialogues of the Roman orator there is less taste and brilliancy than in Plato's, where his language is a medium between prose and poetry.—Marsilio Ficino, his interpreter, has occasion for much indulgence. He left nothing in his power undone to facilitate the comprehension of his author, and we profit at this day of the light he has thrown upon him. Yet if he has assisted us in acquiring a knowledge of the Platonic system, in some instances he has obscured its doctrines; and he is both a critic that occasionally leads us astray, and a guide that we must not always follow. Though he prided himself less on his learning than on his philosophy, and though his reputation in the latter was established, if we may judge from his writings, we may question his title to it. In the cause of truth he is cold, with the marvellous he is in raptures; and instead of embracing the celestial Juno, he

Criticism on the writings of Marsilio Ficino.

he catches at a cloud. The veil of allegory served him to embellish, or rather to disfigure the simple and natural thoughts of his author. Full of the idea that Plato had wrapped up every thing in the profoundest mystery, he supposed he had attached different sentiments to the common acceptation of the words he used, and that he would not have had any pretensions to have been called the Divine Plato, if he had written or spoken like any other Mortal. This was undoubtedly a great abuse of the clue which many of the ancient philosophers have indicated to us, and without which it would be often impossible to penetrate Plato's meaning. With many others he was of an opinion, that there were truths from which the lower classes of mankind could reap no benefit; falsities, which it was necessary they should believe as truths; and that as works purely philosophical were not able to inspire them with virtuous sentiments, recourse might properly be had to superstition, and the influence of fables. Governed by these principles, in imitation of the Egyptian priests, recollecting the exile of Anaxagoras (*c*), with the tragical fate of his beloved Socrates before his eyes, Plato employed in his works what was called the double doctrine, an expedient the most absurd, if it was not excusable

(*c*) "Tristi Anaxagoræ, et imprimis carissimi præceptoris Socratis exemplo didicerat, quam periculosum esset, arcana dogmata propalari, et quam caro vitæ libertatisque pretio illis constiterit, quod in occultandis placitis suis non cauti satis atque attenti fuerint; cumque novam de Deo et divinis Philosophiam ex Italiâ atque Oriente advexisset, timebat jure meritòque, ne, si ea in vulgus propalam emanaret, æquè tristia experiretur fata." *Brucker. Hist. Crit. Philos.*

cusable from necessity. What may be explained in two contrary methods deserves not any explanation. Sometimes his expressions present one idea, whilst another is concealed in them; sometimes he speaks his own natural sentiments, and at others he conforms to the general and public opinion, in common and ordinary language.— The suppositions, however, of Marsilio Ficino, frequently ill applied, and too generally adopted, led him into a labyrinth of errors, and without great caution his readers may share his fate. His extravagance, though he had a good understanding and great natural sense, was also owing to another cause. Like Gemisthus Pletho, under whom he had been educated, he was more an Alexandrine Syncretist, a Theurgist, an Orphic, than a Platonic philosopher. Plato himself describes the Orphics as a species of impostors, "Ἀγύρται," who, loaded with formularies attributed to Orpheus and Musæus, beset the houses of the rich, and offered to purify them and their ancestors of their crimes, by means of sacrifices, and other religious mummeries. By this definition he seemed to have raised a wall or sunk a ditch to separate them and cut off all communication between them and his own sect. Yet what he hazarded in various parts of his dialogues on the subject of the different orders of intellectual beings and of the Genii subordinate to others, furnished the later Orphics with the means of joining his disciples, of corrupting them, and of substituting their own tenets for those of the ancient Platonic school, though they wished

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to be considered as real Platonicians.—Apollonius of Tyana, Maximus Tyrius, Plotinus, Porphyrius, Eunapius, Crysanthus, the emperor Julian, and Proclus were true Orphics under this disguise. Their principal dogma they pretended to have received last from Plato and first from the

"—— Threicius longa cum veste sacerdos,"

from whom their absurdities, which appear to us so inconceivable, are derived. They held that Man, who makes up the last order of intelligences, should only address himself to the inferior divinities; that to render them propitious, it was necessary to influence the different orders of Genii, Demons, and Heroes, who formed the intervening chain, by which means we could get at the superior deities, and force them to attend to us; that by this mode the soul gradually ascended to the immediate view of the Sovereign Being himself, when it became a divinity and was absorbed in the Great Author of truth and goodness. The Orphics of later ages employed the same fantastic system to justify as well as they were able their polytheism, and all the superstitious rites of the popular religion, the worship of idols the supposed habitation of the Deity, and even the virtue of magical incantations, which they supposed terrified the Genii, and rendered them obedient. Marsilio Ficino and his followers might not give into this system in its fullest extent,

CHAP. III. extent (*a*), and without restriction; but in disavowing the horrors that Porphyry and Julian vomited forth against the GALILÆANS, and innocent also of fraud and imposture, they still retained as many of the Orphic tenets as they could, and what they retained, they accommodated in one manner or another to the Christian Religion which they continued to profess. The Christianity of Marsilio Ficino was indeed of a very particular kind, and we have a treatise of his on its truth.—The title is specious, the work is wretched.—Attacked as Christianity has been in our days with so much effrontery and fury, and defended with so much ability, and success; against which "the "Gates of Hell are never to prevail;" it is under no obligations to Ficino, and a similar apologist is at best but a dubious friend. Another reproach has been also made to Plato's translator and commentator. There is not a single dialogue in which the Greek philosopher did not propose to himself some particular end, and if his views are misunderstood or not entered into, his ideas lose their connection, his ingenuity is no longer visible, and even the delicacy of his sentiments is imperceptible. Here his interpreter has often failed. Far from having discovered what Plato had proposed, he frequently takes a part or an episode for the whole, and of the accessary he makes the principal. It were a vain wish to expect in

(*a*) "In omnibus quæ hîc et alibi a me tractantur, tantum assertum esse volo, quantum ab Ecclesiâ comprobatur." *Mars. Fic. de Triplici vitâ.*

in a translation the great beauties of the original. The version of Ficino is rather a paraphrase than a translation; sometimes scarcely Latin; dry, dull, and tedious; but as it gives the sense of Plato, it has its use.

The translations of Iamblichus, Plotinus, and Hierocles have the reputation of being more obscure than the text, and to say that is not to say a little.

When the Florentine quitted his Commentaries and Translations, he took a flight upon his own wings, and fell. A Reader must have uncommon fortitude to wade through his eighteen books on the most interesting of all subjects, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Happiness of the Life to come.—His treatise "de Triplici Vitâ" is not worth perusal, and the two parts of it, "de Vitâ Sanâ et de Vitâ Longâ," are trivial and unintelligible (*b*). This singular composition contains a collection of

(*b*) "Opportunè nostra nos studia exordimur horâ unâ saltem vel duabus ante Solis exortum. Sed antequam è lecto surgas, perfrica parumper suaviterque palmis corpus totum primò. Scalpito deinde caput unguibus, sed id paulò levius. Cum è lecto surrexeris, noli subitò lectioni meditationique prorsus incumbere.——Post horæ dimidium meditationi accingere diligenter, quam ad horam circiter unam pro viribus prorogabis. Deinde remittes parumper mentis intentionem, atque interim eburneo pectine diligenter et moderatè pectes caput a fronte cervicem versus quadragies pectine ducto. Tum cervicem panno asperiori perfrica. Demum reversus ad meditandum, duas insuper horas, aut saltem horam unam studio dedicato, &c."

His advice to the aged wears a different complection. "Ad almam Venerem vos omnes, senes, advoco, non ludentem quidem vobiscum, sed jocantem. Hæcce

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of visions, so very fantastical and strange, that it is extremely foolish. Of the latter part "de Vitâ cœlitus "agendâ (*c*)," Brucker hath delivered the opinion "ad "librum de cœlitus conservandâ vitâ magno studio in- "eptias tradidit (*d*)."

After these criticisms justice should have its due. Marsilio Ficino had without dispute great imagination and great intellectual powers, and he had some merit in his introduction of Plato to the Latin Reader. The Athenian philosopher continued to be in fashion, though his rival retained the superiority till the seventeenth century, when the blind credulity for Aristotle gave way to a more rational admiration of him, and from a more rational acquaintance with him and his chimerical speculations, a more timid but surer system of philosophy prevailed.—With all his imperfections Marsilio Ficino was a memorable person for the age in which he lived, without

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vobis inquam et mihi jam seni jocosum hoc fundit oraculum; Ego filii, si nescitis, voluptate motuque vobis vitam dedi; ego igitur voluptate quâdam motuque etsi non simili, vobis servabo vitam, &c."—And that their "Labours of Love" might not be unsuccessful, there is a curious chapter "De Astronomicâ Diligentiâ IN LIBERIS PROCREANDIS."

(*c*) Amongst many facetious things we are told, "Quomodo fiat attractus ab unâquaque stellâ; quomodo spiritus noster hauriat mundi spiritum per radios Solis et Jovis, quoque pacto ipse fiat Solaris et Jovialis; quod tres sint Gratiæ, Jupiter, Sol, et Venus; quomodo planetis uti debeamus in medicinis, &c. &c.

(*d*) *Bruckeri Historia Crit. Philosophiæ, tom.* 4. *part.* 1. 53. 4*to. Lips.* 1766.

out being its superior. That honour was reserved for a fellow-citizen and cotemporary of Cosmo de' Medici, though fame, which repeats even some names to satiety, had left his in oblivion till an accident within these few years brought him into notice. Paolo de Pozzo Toscanelli or Toscanella was the author of the Gnomon in the cathedral at Florence, which Condamine Ximenes de Lande, Montuola, Frisi, and Boscovich have declared to be the most precious work of its kind, and the first astronomical instrument in the world. The invention of the Gnomon (*e*) (a term of Greek extraction signifying Rule or Index) is due to the Ionian School. Anaximander immediately found its use in astronomy, and he observed with it the return of the sun or the solstices, and probably measured the obliquity of the Ecliptic at the Equator, which his master Thales had discovered or seen imperfectly.—Salmasius hath pretended that the instrument

Paolo de Pozzo Toscanelli.

(*e*) The Gnomon is an astronomical instrument or apparatus for measuring the Meridian, Altitudes, and Declinations of the sun and stars. The most ancient observation of this kind that we know of, was that of Pytheas in the time of Alexander the Great at Marseilles, when he found the height of the Gnomon was to the meridian, shadow at the summer solstice as 213⅘ to 600, just as Gassendus found it to be by an observation made at Marseilles also in 1636, almost two thousand years afterwards. (*See Ricciol. Alm. vol.* 1. *lib.* 3. *c.* 14.) Ulugh Beigh made use of a Gnomon in 1437, which is supposed to have been one hundred and eighty Roman feet high: one was erected at Bologna in 1655 about 20 feet high. The Egyptian obelisks seem to have been also used for this purpose, and the Spaniards on their conquests of Peru and Mexico found many pillars, by the meridian shadows of which their Amautas or philosophers had learnt to determine the times of the Equinoxes, which they celebrated with extraordinary rejoicings and offerings to the Sun. *Garcillasso de la Vega Hist. Peru, lib.* 2. *c.* 22.

strument attributed by Diogenes Laertius to Anaximander was even inferior to a solar Quadrant, and he adds that such a machine could only be of service in marking exactly the points of the solstices, the equinoxes, the meridians, and the seasons, but could not be of any use in tracing the course of the sun from its rising to its setting. As great a scholar as Salmasius was, we here find that he has inadvertently ascribed to Anaximander's instrument properties much superior to those of the solar Quadrant.

The Moderns have happily remedied many defects of Anaximander's Gnomon, but it is astonishing that such an instrument as Toscanelli's should have remained for two centuries unknown or neglected, and in such a city. It was sleeping in this state of oblivion when Mons[r]. Condamine celebrated by his travels under the direction of his sovereign to determine the figure of the earth, by the profoundest knowledge of every kind, and by a zeal for the public interest, but who now ceasing to philosophize,

"Sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera,"

passed through Florence. On his discovery of it he made an immediate application to the Imperial minister, and the Abbè Ximenes was directed to inspect it. The learned Abbè verified all its parts; retraced the meridian line, which had suffered; made many new solstitial observations;

servations; and concluded by a comparison of them with the ancient ones, how much the obliquity of the Ecliptic had diminished in the space of two hundred and forty-three years. This Gnomon announces in Toscanelli knowledge and abilities as marvellous as they were superior to the age in which he lived; for it was in the life of Cosmo de' Medici that he began this beautiful work. As the subject is mysterious, Monsr. Condamine, one of the Initiated, will best describe the instrument in his own words.

" La grande solidité, de la plaque de bronze destinée
" à servir de centre au Gnomon, laquelle est épaisse de
" sept lignes, encastrée et scellée dans la corniche de la
" lanterne qui couronne le dôme, soutenue par deux for-
" tes consoles aussi de bronze, percée avec une attention
" refléchie d'une ouverture conique en bizeau; la vive-
" arrête de la pierre (où cette plaque est scellèe) abatue,
" et le bord de la pierre excavé, pour que la plaque en-
" tière puisse toujours être éclairée du Soleil à midi; sa
" hauteur de plus de 277 pieds de Paris au-dessus du pa-
" vé de l'Eglise; le diamètre du trou moindre que la
" deux-millième partie de sa hauteur; le marbre circu-
" laire posé dans le pavé de l'Eglise pour recevoir la
" projection de l'image du Soleil au solstice d'Eté; l'ob-
" servation qui fut faite sur ce marbre en 1510 attestée
" par une inscription encore lisible; tout annonce la ca-
" pacité et les grandes vûes de l'auteur de cet ouvrage."

Such

Such is the account that Monsr. Condamine communicated to the French academy of sciences. Notwithstanding geometry, on which the construction of the Gnomon is founded, at present is in so little estimation, in the fifteenth century it was a nice and profound theory. If Toscanelli had acquired that immense mass of knowledge necessary for such a work; if by the efforts of his own genius he supplied himself with the assistance he might have received from antiquity, but which was utterly unknown in the time he lived; if he found his way amidst such intricacies and difficulties, and foresaw the attempts by which succeeding ages have been conducted to experiments, that require as much ingenuity as precision, Galileo's predecessor may be justly reckoned the head of the philosophical school of Florence. His instrument, indeed, restored as it now is, will be the lasting monument of his fame. As long as the cupola of St. Maria di Fiori shall remain, Toscanelli's Gnomon will continue to determine the solstices, and consequently the equinox, by which the Christian church is governed in its celebration of the festival of Easter.

The height of this Gnomon exceeds those of the three other European instruments taken altogether. One of them had the illustrious Casini for its author at Bologna; another was constructed by Bianchi, and is at the Chartreux in Rome; and the third is to be seen in the church of St. Sulpice at Paris.

When

When Toscanelli rendered this service to astronomy, George of Trebisonde was of some use to the same science in his translation of the Almagesta of Ptolemy from a Greek copy in the possession of Cardinal Bessarion, on which he set a high value.

Ptolemy the Alexandrine is the only one of all the ancient astronomers whose works have reached us. Notwithstanding the common opinion that Ptolemy was only a paltry proficient in the science, his great work is extremely precious, and is the single treatise of the History of Astronomy, amidst a long night of ignorance, which has come down to us, and from which the Moderns are obliged to borrow all the ancient observations in their inquiries into the middle movements. This treatise has the Greek title of "Μεγαλη Συνταξις," and is divided into thirteen books. In the ninth century it was translated from the Greek into Arabic by the Mahometan Alhazen Ben-Honaïn, and by the Christian Sergius, under the patronage of the great Almamoun, Caliph of Bagdad, who ordered also a degree of the meridian to be geometrically measured for the purpose of determining the greatness of the earth. Four centuries afterwards the Emperor Frederic the IId, directed it to be translated from the Arabic; and there are yet some other versions, both printed and in manuscript, from Alhazen and Sergius, or rather from their Hebrew copyists. George of Trebisonde went to the fountain-head, and translated this important work

work from the Greek text.—His Latin style in his other translations is tolerable, here it is almost barbarous; there is such obscurity in it, and the subject seems so little understood, that it becomes often necessary to consult the original text. It is said, (but what has not been said?) that George of Trebisonde's children poisoned the famous Regiomontanus, who came from Konigsberg to Rome for the reformation of the calendar, on his publishing their father's errors in his version of Ptolemy. This version, however, imperfect as it may be, is the only one yet undertaken from the Greek; and it is matter of astonishment that a work, formerly so important, should have been so ill executed.

Few people have to learn that the astronomy of the period under consideration, (and, unfortunately, it is not to that period alone the reproach is applicable), was miserably infected with the follies of the pretended art of predicting moral events, by the positions and the influence of the heavenly bodies. The term moral events is made use of, for natural astrology or the probability of changes in the atmosphere, of winds and tempests, inundations, or convulsions of the earth, is a branch of physics which is not to be despised. Astronomy, a science so noble and sublime, and judicial astrology, the most ridiculous hypocrisy, were then closely united; and the divine Urania, with her phantom sister, appeared together.

"Mortua quin etiam jungebant corpora vivis."

Not only the lower classes of mankind were credulous enough to believe in its existence, but it was the favourite superstition of men of science, who took more pleasure in it, and were more tenacious of it. But prejudice sometimes strikes the deepest root in the soil where we should the least expect it; and whenever an idea germinates in a learned head, it shoots with additional luxuriance.

Gianozzo Manetti, of Florence, another cotemporary of Cosmo de' Medici, and one of the best scholars of his time, after the example of Toscanelli, turned his thoughts to similar pursuits. His native city had sent him on more than twenty embassies, and recompensed his public services and his merit by banishment. Gianozzo Manetti.

The Arabic and Indian arithmetic had already passed into Europe in the reign of Charlemagne, though another mathematical part of science, of which only one Greek author has treated, notwithstanding it had been greatly cultivated by the Arabs, had not met with the same good fortune, and was a novelty in the West as late as the fifteenth century.—Leonardo of Pisa, from an ardent desire of instruction in the mathematics, had undertaken long voyages into the East, and to Arabia; and he returned with the Alchebrah-Almacabelah, or our algebra, instead

 instead of a cargo of manna, coffee, balm, or incense. He published, however, nothing on the subject; and contented himself with the initiation of a few of his friends into these new mysteries.

Luca Paciolo.

Luca Paciolo, more known under the name of Luca de Borgo, a native of the town of Borgo San Sepolcro, annexed by Cosmo de' Medici to the Florentine dominions, first published the principles of algebra, a few years after Leonardo of Pisa had introduced it. They are to be found in his "Summa de Arithmeticâ et Geo-"metriâ," and form the greater part of what he calls the "Arte Maggiore," a term which Cardan and others have since applied to algebra. Luca de Borgo, however, ascends no higher than equations of the second degree, and the rules he gives for their solutions rest on the same principles as ours, though not in the terms, from the language of the science being then very different. Luca de Borgo was a stranger to the use of negative roots; he had not thought sufficiently on the nature of quantities, and his sketch will not bear the remotest comparison with the algebra of Saunderson, La Caille, Clairaut, Gravesende, Euler, and Bossut, whose works, though elementary, are full of the greatest knowledge of metaphysics, analogy, and geometry, which the early mathematicians wanted.

That the mathematics were cultivated later than languages,

guages, arts, and other sciences, ought not to astonish us. Every trace indeed of these useful and sublime, but difficult and intricate studies had been lost. Homer and Thucydides, Livy and Cicero, were in every hand, whilst Euclid, Apollonius, Archimedes, Diophantus, Pappus, and many others, the great masters in mathematical learning, lay covered with dust in libraries. The first step was to bring them into light. Under these circumstances the study of mathematics languished, with a few exceptions, for a considerable length of time, and began only to flourish after the publication of these ancient originals, which have enabled the Moderns to extend their knowledge beyond that of their predecessors. A Modern has been said to be " a dwarf on a giant's shoulders." It would be ridiculous to apply the observation to our modern geometers, amongst whom it is universally allowed there are many giants. Yet these giants are undoubtedly under some obligations to the Ancients; for though a giant may see to a great distance, on the shoulders of another giant he may see still further.

CHAP. IV.

GENIUS and Taste of the Etruscans—Ancient Limits of Etruria—Tuscan Statues—Potteries—Paintings—Workmanship on Stone—Medals—Musicians and Musical Instruments—Architecture—Painting—Cimabue—Giotto—Gaddi—Memmi—Buffalmacco--Bicci--Painting in Mosaic—Paulo Uccelli—Angelico—Masaccio—Sculpture—Donatello—Lorenzo Ghiberti—Arnolfo di Lapo—Orgagna—Filippo Brunelleschi—Michelozzi.

BRUNELLESCHI

CHAP. IV.

THE Arts and Sciences, which are the antidotes of many cares that poison human life, have always considered Tuscany as their native country, and may be reckoned the natural fruits of its prolific soil. Climate has undoubtedly an influence, though genius may be owing to other causes, or extended by them. For three thousand years, or from time immemorial, the inhabitants of this happy province, the Etruscans, who have not been sufficiently respected because not sufficiently known, have distinguished themselves in every kind of Virtù. They held a long time the sceptre of arts, as their descendants of the House of Medici have done. We cannot indeed travel back to the precise period, when the arts and sciences established themselves amongst them, but they

Genius and Taste of the Etruscans.

they flourished in Tuscany many centuries before the foundation of Rome. The history and the names of their artists are now unknown; we can but conjecture, though we may conjecture on strong principles,

> " ——— quibus Itala jam tum
> Floruerit terra alma viris."

Historical monuments are likewise wanting, and

> " Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura."

The arts of Etruria, however, survived the successive inundations of Bellovesus, Brennus, and the Gaulish Senones, though they declined after the misunderstanding of the twelve Districts or Lucomonies had delivered up the country to the Romans. Writers have pretended, that the jealousy of the conquerors put an end to the arts and sciences, but such a supposition is not consistent with the generous conduct of the Roman people, and on their conquest of Etruria they had not such a taste for them, as to occasion any jealousy concerning them. A more rational cause for their decline may be assigned. Rome had the sense to incorporate the nations she subdued, and the Tuscans on their change of fortune took insensibly, if not at once, the mode of thinking peculiar to their conquerors, of whom they first became the auxiliaries, and then the fellow-citizens. Arts were then

soon

soon neglected for arms, but originally there is little doubt of their having possessed both the profoundest knowledge and the happiest talents.—If we are to ascertain what they owed to Greece and to themselves, it may be necessary to attend minutely to the different periods of Etrurian history. We should be truly blind if we did not perceive in the last years of their national existence an unequivocal impression of Grecian extract, though in carefully combining the events with the periods, we may discover from the same evidence, that the arts and sciences could not in the first instance have passed out of Greece into Etruria. They flourished in Tuscany when Greece was itself in a state of barbarism, and even without the first and necessary inventions; when their wandering Pelasgi roamed through their forests and shook the oak and beech for their daily food. Men in this rude state could not have been either sculptors or painters, nor have brought the arts and sciences to the Italians, to which notwithstanding their natural genius they must have been entire strangers. Cicero has justly observed, "Necessitatis inventa antiquiora sunt quam "voluptatis (*a*);" yet allowing necessity to have been the mother of invention, and that objects of pleasure are but her secondary ones, the axiom may be carried too far. It strictly applies but to discoveries of what is absolutely

(*a*) *Cicero. Orat.*

solutely wanted, and we should often impose upon ourselves if we dated an invention from the degree of its utility. Greece and the Grecians furnish us with an example to elucidate the point. Their majestic architects, their great painters, their sublime poets and sculptors were still ignorant of a multitude of things, which we daily want, and without which we could not live either with comfort or convenience. Their dress, elegant in appearance as it might be, was very troublesome and defective, and this polished people of so much genius and taste, had neither buttons, shoes, stockings, nor linen. Not a single Greek had a saddle or stirrups for his horse, and their houses were equally without chimneys, glass for their windows, and candles.

Perhaps Italy might have had some trifling connection with Egypt, on the subject of which the Learned are not agreed. Many have no doubts of it, others, who have not less sagacity, have not been able to discover any resemblance in the monuments of the two countries. The idea of such an intimacy may have been taken up from some passages of ancient authors ill understood, and the Egyptians and Etruscans might be as little known to each other, as the Laplanders and Spaniards. But it may be said, the Egyptian Apis deified after his death, and from whom the Apennines received their name, had been brought into Etruria, and the arts and sciences were imported along with him. Such an ety-

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mogical argument may rest in quiet, and the travels of this imaginary Being may be properly classed amongst the most childish tales. In any sense, if the Etruscan arts are of Egyptian origin, they were introduced by Tuscans, and not by Egyptians, who had a contempt for navigation, and held the sea to be, like their Typhon, an evil principle. A circumstance, at the first view not very trivial, appears to confirm the reality of the connection, which consists in the frequent representations of the Scarabees, multiplied to infinity, that have been brought from Clusium and Pelusium. This singularity seems to prove the fact, and it is difficult to imagine how two people could have recourse to the same absurdity, without having borrowed it from the same source; but the most striking resemblances are sometimes the most deceitful. Could it, in fact, be conceived that this ridiculous superstition of the Scarabees, considered as symbols of the Divinity, should have infected a great part of the whole earth? These insects are even yet adored in Africa, or at least in the qualities of Manitos or Fetiches, they are universally respected. With many of the negroes they are the articles of commerce, and the inhabitants of Congo without the possession of some swarms of them, would suppose themselves to be in a state of reprobation.—The great divinity of Madagascar is of the species, and on the Friezes of Persepolis the figures of two of them with extended wings are

to be seen most elegantly worked. The same prejudices have been introduced into Europe, and Monsr. Reaumur informs us that the peasants of Poitou have given the most ridiculous names to these insects. St. Ambrose has also often compared Christ to a Scarabee, though it is impossible to divine on what this odious and profane comparison has been founded. It does not, however, follow that the Bishop of Milan, the ancient Tuscans, and the Caffres have all drank of the Nile, and this idea so universally received and spread through so many different nations cannot be supposed to be the distinct character of the Egyptians.—Whatever opinion may be formed, and admitting the intercourse between them and the later Tuscans, their imitation was never servile. Their excellent organization was the immediate work of nature, and every thing from their hands was stamped with an original impression, which is not to be confounded with that of any other people.

It appears the Tuscans were employed in every kind of sculpture, and in the little town of Bolsena, on the lake of that name, and formerly Volsynia, the country of Sejanus, there were formerly above two thousand statues. In all probability they were little figures, about a foot in height, which we now call Bronze; and Metrodorus Scepsius, an ancient Greek historian, and a violent enemy to the Romans, accuses them of besieging it for

the

the express purpose of plundering it of these treasures (*b*). The Tuscan Apollo, placed, according to the historian of Nature and of Art, in " Bibliothecâ Divi Augusti," was a very different one, and about fifty feet in height. The composition and its beauty, Pliny tells us, were equally admirable (*c*). Many Etruscan pieces of sculpture, and in particular the famous one dug up near Arezzo, in the middle of the sixth century; and the brazen figure of the Lucumo, representing a magistrate or augur, having the pupils of the eyes of precious stones, are curiosities which are still to be seen in the Florentine gallery. Sculpture being a less complicated art than that of casting statues in Bronze, we may presume the Tuscans made use of marble for their statues. They could not have been inattentive to their different quarries, or have trodden under foot the beautiful produce of Carrara, from which Michelagnolo, the Bandinelli and Bernini, have derived their glory. The dutchy of Carrara does not at present belong to Tuscany, for the ancient Etruria had very different limits. The Arno, in its course from East to West, divided it nearly into two equal parts, one of which

Ancient limits of Etruria.

(*b*) " Signa quoque Tuscanica per terras dispersa, quæ in Etruria factitata non est dubium. Deorum tantum putarem ea fuisse, ni Metrodorus Scepsius, cui cognomen Romani nominis odio inditum est, propter duo millia statuarum Volsinios expugnatos objiceret." *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib.* 34. *tom.* 5. 102. 4*to.* 1685.

(*c*) " Videmus certe Tuscanicum Apollinem in bibliotheca templi Augusti, quinquaginta pedum a pollice, dubium ære mirabiliorem an pulchritudine."
Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. 34. *tom.* 5. 106. 4*to.* 1685.

which almost reached the gates of Rome; and the other the frontier of Liguria, contained, besides Pisa, a part of the state of Genoa, the dutchy of Carrara, Val di Magra, and the territories of Lucca. Some towns also which depend on the dutchies of Spoleto and Urbino, such as Perousia and Gubio, belonged also to Etruria. There was indeed a time, but in the remotest antiquity, when the Etrurians were not confined within these bounds, and on one side penetrated into Campania, of which the principal cities were Tuscan colonies, as far as Calabria and Brutium; on the other, they conquered all the beautiful valley to the North-east of the Apennines, on the shores of the Adriatic gulph, pushed their settlements into the Alps, reduced the wilds of Rhætia, and in a word became possessed of all Italy, the little district of Henetes or Venetes excepted, which was a sacred asylum then inaccessible to usurpers and to conquerors.

According to some authors, this great extent of territory was preserved for many centuries; by others it has been confined within a narrower period, but long before the foundation of Rome this mighty inundation had returned into its own channel, and Etruria had the boundaries which have been just described.

The plastic art, or that of modelling, appears to have been what the Etrurians most excelled in. Sculpture was the earliest imitation of visible objects, from being the most perfect,

perfect, and undoubtedly it began by modelling. Clay, of all substances we know, preserves best the form which is given to it, is most pliant and flexible, and being always to be found, in all probability was first used. —The Tuscans, not satisfied with ornamenting their own towns, enriched those of their neighbours; and in the time of Trajan, Italy was full of their figures. The workmanship of these figures was admirable, and when age had given them a solidity they were valued like gold. Rome, in particular, boasted of them, and those of her first Kings and the Augur Navius, erected in the reign of the Elder Tarquin, were of Etruscan manufacture, as well as that of Horatius Cocles, and the Equestrian statue of Clœlia (*a*).—It is extraordinary, no doubt, that the statues of these fierce enemies of Porsenna should have been the work of Porsenna's subjects; but in our days we have seen the busts of Anne Queen of England, and the Conqueror at Blenheim, executed by subjects of the French King.

Tuscan statues

Long before Camillus had acquired by conquest the Juno

(*a*) "Clœlia virgo, una ex obsidibus, quum castra Etruscorum forte haud procul ripa Tiberis locata essent, frustata custodes, dux agminis virginum inter tela hostium Tiberim tranavit: sospitesque omnes Romam ad propinquos restituit. ——— Pace redintegrata, Romani novam in femina virtutem novo genere honoris, statua equestri, donavere in summa sacra via fuit posita virgo insidens equo."

T. Liv. lib. 2. c. 13. tom. 1. 293—295.

Juno Regina of the Veyes, which was so highly honoured at Rome, the Tarquins had fetched from Fregelli the famous "Hercules Argillaceus," which retained its name from the materials of which it was composed.—The first Jupiter of the Capitol was also Tuscan; and the four-wheeled chariot, which was to be seen on his temple, had received its last polish from Etruscan hands, under the first Roman consuls.—When Pliny wrote, a great number of Roman temples and municipal towns were ornamented with groups by the Tuscan artists, and the facts which have been related are also confirmed by the authority of Livy.

Potteries.

Their Potteries were also in high estimation.—This ancient manufacture enjoyed great credit during many years, and was in as much reputation as china is with us. Arezzo was, in fact, what the village of King-te-Ching, in the province of Hou-Quang, is to Europe.

Such immense and incredible quantities of this earthen ware have been discovered at different times, that the Etruscan antiquities are as numerous as those of the Greeks and Romans; and, considering the substance is so brittle, their preservation is extraordinary. Whole hills of them have been found near Volterra, in many parts of Tuscany, and out of it.—This ancient manufacture was known almost immemorially, and the Poet Mar-

tial

tial has mentioned it in one of his epigrams (*b*). John Villani, eleven centuries afterwards, informs us that such beautiful vessels were formerly made at Arezzo, as seemed almost to exceed the reach of human abilities (*c*). If the Historian has said too much, the Poet has said too little. Yet the Roman authors in general have dwelt too much on the workmanship, whilst the elegance and variety of the designs, the chastity of their shapes, the purity of their ornaments, and even the just disposition of the handles ought to have had more attention bestowed on them. In all of them great taste is visible, and so often repeated, it could not have been the effect of accident.

Another advantage of the Etruscan earthen ware consisted in the propriety of its ornaments, which were, with some few exceptions, generally of use, and introduced in order to increase the convenience of what they were a part. A white, a black, and sometimes a red clay, found

(*b*) "Aretina nimis ne spernas vasa: monemus,
Lautus erat Tuscis Porsena Fictilibus."
Martialis Epigram. lib. 14. 98.

And Pliny mentions them also with credit: "Retinet hanc nobilitatem et Arretium in Italia." *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib.* 35. 646. *tom.* 5. 244. 4*to.* 1685.

(*c*) "In Arezzo furono anticamente fatti per sottilissimi maëstri vasi con diversi intagli di tutte forme di si sottile intaglio, che veggendoli pareano impossibili essere opere umana."

found near Arezzo, and from thence called Aretonium, was employed in the work. On one of the three grounds we see figures of one of these three colours, but a different one to the ground, and those vessels of a blue or yellow are curiosities.

Of the connoisseur who amuses himself with such collections we cannot say:

"Animum picturâ pascit inani,"

for nothing is more instructive. Domestic cares and occupations, marriages, spectacles, masquerades, contests in the circus, equestrian exercises, the chace, triumphs, mysteries, orgies, funeral rites, the Lares, the Lamiæ, the Penates, Larvæ and Lemures, Æsars (*d*), and Deities of every description, with all ancient Etruria pass in review before the enchanted eye. Grecian fables, adapted to Tuscan usages, are common subjects. These fables, however embellished by the Grecians, were not always of Grecian origin; and Etruria, when copying, sometimes only resumed what first belonged to her. Yet their fabulous history was so beautiful, so poetical and picturesque,

(*d*) "Mors Augusti divinitasque post mortem evidentissimis ostentis præcognita est. ——— Ictu fulminis ex inscriptione statuæ ejus prima nominis littera effluxit. Responsum est, centum solos dies posthac victurum, quem numerum C littera notaret, futurumque ut inter Deos referretur, quod ÆSAR, id est, reliqua pars è Cæsaris nomine Etruscâ linguâ Deus vocaretur." *Sueton. in Aug. Cab.* 115.

turesque, that it has been every where admired; and we find it amongst the people where we should least expect it. In this manner, according to the romantic Philostrates, his strolling Prophet saw at Babylon, and in the Court of the Parthian King Bardanes, a superb collection of hangings, which represented the stories of Andromeda, Amynome, and Orpheus (*e*); and even the mythology of our ancestors, the Celtes, has some traces of Grecian fables, with the alteration only of a few names and circumstances.

The figures in the Tuscan manufacture are not always, we must allow, equally correct. In some instances they are rudely drawn, but at the same time we have often occasion to admire the boldness of the attitudes, the shortening of the figures, the exactness of the draperies, the true principles of proportion, a neatness of expression, with a perfect knowledge of grace and composition. In the two latter even Rafaello could not have excelled them. Their principal decorations were those of architecture, flowers, and trees, but no landscapes. We are not, however, to conclude from this circumstance, that the Etruscans were unacquainted with their beauties. A moment's reflection will convince us they were incompatible with the nature of their work, and they seem to have been

(*e*) "Τα δε ποικιλματα τῶν πεπλων εκ των Ελληνικῶν σφισιν ἡκει λογων, Ανδρομεδαι, και Αμυμῶναι, και Ορφευς πολλαχη." *Philostr. lib.* 1. *c.* 25. *folio. Lip.* 1709.

been under the necessity of sacrificing their knowledge to it.

Mons[r]. Pecheux, an able French painter, settled at Rome, has observed to Mons[r]. D'Hancarville, after an attentive consideration of the subject, "That the Etrus-"can artists were infinitely superior to their works; that "the difficulties they had to encounter in their execution "were such as prevented them shewing half of their abi-"lities; and that they must have been great proficients "in drawing to have produced even the incorrect pieces "which they did."—Other modern artists have admitted also the difficulty they had to struggle with in the representation of figures on a clay so very porous, that had not the advantage of being glazed. If, however, we may have lost some portion of the knowledge of the Ancients, let us recollect it has been amply made up by new inventions more useful, and discoveries more advantageous.

Of the immense quantities of earthen ware found in the kingdom of Naples, and called Campanian, most is of Etruscan manufacture. Without a reference to any other evidence, the Etruscan characters from the right to the left, and which cannot be taken for any other, Samaritan excepted, and that only at the first view, substantiate the fact. Whether they were really made at Arezzo, or in one of the other towns, Nola, near the foot

of

of Vesuvius, Capua, and Campana near Cuma, and Pozzoli, it makes little difference. There will be but occasion to recollect what has been said of the boundaries of Etruria, and it will be found that the principal towns of Campania were originally Etruscan colonies. It may be said another kind of earthen ware has been found in the kingdom of Naples, and particularly in Sicily, at Palermo, Catanea, and Girgenti, which has a near resemblance to the Etruscan manufacture in substance, form, and colours. Accident could not have produced it; and it is as certain it is not Tuscan. Whatever may have been the merit of the Etruscan earthen ware, it is inferior. We there recollect with transport the best Grecian style, of an age when the arts had arrived at their highest elevation in Greece, and we discover at once that noble simplicity, that exquisite taste, which characterized the chosen people of the Muses and the Graces. The designs of the figures, the mode of grouping them, are wonderfully correct, and the whole is in a most masterly style. In all likelihood the inhabitants of what was called the Græcia Magna, or those of Sicily, Samos (*f*), Tralles, Erythrea, and Cos endeavoured to improve on the Tuscan manufacture, or copied it as the European artists have imitated China. Both the Etruscan and the Etruscan-Greek earthen

(*f*) "Fama est fictilibus cœnasse Agathoclea regem,
Atque abacum SAMIO sæpe onerasse luto."
Ausonii Epig. 8.

earthen ware have been found in abundance within the states of the kingdom of Naples; but the antiquarians have been astonished at not seeing a single piece which was ever painted, in the excavations at Herculaneum, Stabia, and Pompeia.—The beautiful vessels of every kind which have been discovered in the neighbourhood of Naples, and which the Neapolitan artists have constantly before their eyes, have occasioned a circumstance which must strike every stranger that visits Naples. In almost every house, the variety and elegance of the different utensils become an object of his admiration; and, as he recedes from the smoke and flames of Vesuvius, he returns to those Gothic and disgusting forms which custom alone can render tolerable.

Pherecrates hath mentioned two beautiful chandeliers or candlesticks of Etruscan manufacture (*g*), but of their composition nothing is now known.

If the ancient Tuscans were acquainted with the art of Painting with the pencil as other nations have used it, their authors have observed a profound silence on the subject, and there is not a single picture in existence. Pliny mentions in different passages that Painting came out of Greece,

(*g*) "Δια τουτων, τις των λυχνειων ἡ 'εργασια Τυῤῥηνικη." *Athenæ. Deip. lib.* 15. 700. *Folio, Lugdor.* 1612.

Greece (*a*) into Italy, when he speaks of the artist employed on the temple of Ardea, who lived about the first Olympiad, some years before the foundation of Rome, and on whom the Rutuli bestowed the right of citizenship in Ardea with some flattering verses inscribed upon his work (*b*).

Pliny, however, seems to have forgotten what he had said of his Ætolian, in assuring us that Cleophantus brought the art of Painting into Italy, when he followed Demaratus the father of the elder Tarquin, to avoid the persecution of the tyrant Cypselus (*c*). Notwithstanding

(*a*) Of the origin of painting Pliny has given the following history. "De picturæ initiis incerta, nec instituti operis quæstio est. Ægyptii sex millibus annorum apud ipsos inventam, priusquam in Græciam transiret, affirmant, vana prædicatione, ut palam est. Græci autem alii Sicyone, alii apud Corinthios repertam, omnes umbra hominis lineis circumducta. Itaque talem primam fuisse: secundam singulis coloribus, et monochromaton dictam, postquam operosior inventa erat: duratque talis etiam nunc. Inventam linearem dicunt, a Philocle Ægyptio, vel Cleanthe Corinthio. Primi exercuere Ardices Corinthius, et Telephanes Sicyonius, sine ullo etiamnum colore, jam tamen spargentes lineas intus. Ideo et quos pingerent, adscribere institutum. Primus invenit eas colorare, testa (ut ferunt) trita, Cleophantus Corinthius." *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib.* 35. *tom.* 5. 177, 178. 4*to*. 1685.

(*b*) "Decet non sileri et Ardeatis templi pictorem, præsertim civitate donatum ibi, et carmine, quod est in ipsa pictura his versibus:

Dignis digna loca picturis condecoravit,
Reginæ Junonis supremi conjugis templum,
Marcus Ludius Helotas Ætolia oriundus,
Quem nunc et post semper ob artem hanc Ardea laudat."

Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 35. *tom.* 5. 222, 223. 4*to*. 1685.

(*c*) I have translated Monsr. Tenhoven, but the mistake is his and not Pliny's.— The Latin author does not say that Cleophantus brought the art of Painting into Ita-

CHAP. IV.

withstanding these passages, it may still be supposed the art was known in Etruria long before the two periods. The most simple operations in effect prepare the way for the most combined ones. As they had able designers and sculptors, it is not a very hazardous conjecture that the Tuscans had likewise painters.—Painting and sculpture are two sisters tenderly attached to each other, that go always hand in hand, and are as inseparable as the Graces. If nothing but positive proof is to be decisive we may learn from Pliny, whose trifling contradictions are excusable in a work of such a length, that there were some very ancient pictures and of an earlier date than the foundation of Rome at Cære (*d*) a town of Etruria, and most probably they were painted by Etruscans before the Corinthian Cleophantus or the Ætolian Helotas.

Paintings.

Quintus

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ly, and only mentions his attending Demaratus. "Hunc, aut eodem nomine alium fuisse, quem tradit Cornelius Nepos secutum in Italiam Demaratum, Tarquinii Prisci Romani regis patrem, fugientem a Corintho injurias Cypseli tyranni." (*Plin. Nat. Hist. lib.* 35. *tom.* 5. 178. *4to.* 1685.)—The Plastic art he supposes indeed to have been imported with Demaratus, and this circumstance may perhaps have occasioned Monsr. Tenhoven's inadvertency. "DE PICTURA SATIS SUPERQUE: contexuisse his et PLASTICEN conveniat. ——— Sunt qui in Samo primos omnium plasticen invenisse Rhœcum et Theodorum tradant, multo ante Bacchiadas Corintho pulsos. Demaratum vero ex eadem urbe profugum, qui in Etruria Tarquinium Priscum regem populi Romani genuit, comitatos FICTORES Euchira et Eugrammum: ab IIS ITALIÆ TRADITAM PLASTICEN." *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib.* 35. *tom.* 5. 240. *4to.* 1685.

(*d*) "Jam enim absoluta erat pictura etiam in Italiâ. Exstant certe hodieque antiquiores Urbe picturæ Ardeæ in ædibus sacris, quibus equidem nullas æque demiror tam longo ævo durantes in orbitate tecti, veluti recentes. ——— Durant et Cære, antiquiores et ipsæ." *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib.* 35. *tom.* 5. 178. *4to.* 1685.

Quintus Fabius Pictor the first artist who handled the pencil amongst the Romans may also be presumed to have received his instruction in Etruria.

Workmanship on stone.

The difficult art of engraving on stone was likewise familiar to this ancient people. Mnesarchus the father of Pythagoras the philosopher, who has been believed by many learned men to have been a Tuscan, exercised this profession. The connoisseurs discover the Tuscan stones by many signs. Their reverse is generally worked in the form of a Scarabee, a border runs round the figures, and this border has often a circular hole in it which leads to the supposition that they were hung round the neck as ornaments. The style also of the engraving exhibits a certain indication which cannot be mistaken, and the Tuscan "Costume" is adhered to. One example of it is to be met with in the French King's cabinet, published by Mons[r]. Mariette, where there is a Hercules on the reverse of a Scarabee excellently cut, in an Etruscan mantle, and armed not with his massy Grecian club, but a short broad dagger, like a Tuscan warrior or one of the Etrurian deities.—All these stones are cut with art though rather harshly and generally in Basso Relievo. Some are, however, hollow and sunk, and the Contour and muscles too much so. Their artists, less enlightened and not so much versed in the practical part of the business as the Greeks, seem to have painfully followed their method, which is also ours. The figures are generally

 naked

naked (Monsr. Gori does not recollect having seen a head), they are often too thin and meagre, but by no means those long, disproportionate figures of the Egyptians, likely to excite laughter and create disgust. Under a rough outside too stiff and energetic, there is still in the Etruscan engravings a chastity which pleases from its extreme simplicity.

They are often also in the true Grecian manner extremely well finished, and some of them even display a knowledge of picturesque anatomy which is truly admirable. A few magnificent Tuscan engravings were in the Stadtholder's collection at the Hague, and amongst them an Achilles stooping to gather up his quiver, which is as highly finished as it can be. These engravings, however, and even very indifferent ones, are extremely scarce, and the Tuscan medals are not more common. Sometimes they are found by accident in different parts of Tuscany, and particularly about Volterra, near Capua in Campania, and Pestum in Lucania; and they refute the idea of the Monk Suidas, who pretended that the Tuscan money was no other than its earthen ware. The observation respecting the scarcity of the Tuscan medals is not meant to be extended to the Tuscan colonies in Campania, and only includes the cities of Velatri, Ikuvium, Luna, Pupluna, Camers, Tlamun or Volterra, Gubio, Sarzana, Popolonia, Chiusi, and Porto-Telamone. They have little to recommend them, afford no in-

Medals.

struction,

struction, and throw no light either on History or Chronology. Neither the names of the kings nor magistrates appear, no era is marked, and there is nothing on them but the names of the towns to which they belonged, in the characters of the country, with a few symbols, some of which cannot now be deciphered. They often consist of the double face of Janus, the apples of the Hesperides, a Cornu Copiæ, the Cestus, Dolphins, and Anchors.

Musicians and musical instruments.

Writers have mentioned different kinds of flutes, of wood, bone, ivory, the lotus, and of silver, some of which were employed in their religious festivals and public games, and others in private entertainments. At Rome there were constantly Tuscans who played upon the flute at their sacrifices, as we learn from Virgil:

"——— pateris libamus et auro,
Inflavit cum pinguis ebur Tyrrhenus ad Aras (*e*)."

From the first ages of the world, as soon as men were so vicious and unfortunate as to enter into war, they were sensible that loud instruments were proper to silence, or to calm the agitations of the heart, and to excite that heroic infatuation which leads them to brave danger, wounds, and death. The use of the trumpet is therefore of

(*e*) *P. Virgilii Georg.* 2. 192, 193.

of great antiquity, and Madame Dacier is not warranted, merely by Homer's silence, in her criticism of Virgil's

"Exoritur clamorque virûm, clangorque TUBARUM (*f*),"

on the fall of Troy.—Diodorus Siculus attributes however the invention of excellent military trumpets to the Tuscans, which were called Tyrrhenian (*g*).

Multitudes of Tuscan antiquities are ornamented with figures of musical instruments of every denomination, and in shape often very different from the Grecian instruments. They had crotals, cymbals, the epigonion, harps, tymbals, the magadis and simicon, lyres with four and seven strings, but all modified in the fashion of Fregelli, Volsynia, Tarquinia, the Veyes, Cære, and Clusium.—Reasoning from these instruments, the Etruscans must have had great taste for the science; for, by a single glance thrown on their music, we may form a tolerable guess of their taste, and their progress in it. On a view of the Isiac Table, or the Mosaic Table of Palestrine, which supplies us with the figures of some musical instruments, we are at once convinced the Egyptians made the banks of the Nile resound with melody as detestable as

(*f*) *P. Virgilii Æneid.* 2. 313.

(*g*) "Την τε σαλπιγγα λεγομενην εξευρον, ευχρηστοτην μεν εις τους πολεμους, απ' εκεινων δ' ονομασθεισαν Τυρρηνην." *Diod. Sicul. tom.* 1. 362. *Amst.* 1746.

as that of the present Africans. Let us consider but for a moment the form of their Sistrum, in use amongst them in the time of Cleopatra,

"Regina in mediis patrio vocat agmina SISTRO,"

which they have transmitted to the gipsies, their wandering descendants, and we must immediately perceive no harmony could result from it.

Three or four centuries before our era Rome was afflicted with a pestilence. Having exhausted, without effect, all her own superstitious ceremonies; having had recourse to their oracles and Sibylline records, and ran through the whole circle of supplication, she learned her neighbours the Tuscans made use of a form of worship then unknown to her. It was a religious dance, very different from that of the Salii, or the twenty-four Priests of Mars, whose exercise was more of the Pyrrhic kind. To appease the wrath of Heaven, the Tuscan dancers were brought to Rome, and a theatre erected for them. Titus Livy seems to have described precisely the mode of the exhibition, where he tells us it was not Poetry, nor any gestures resembling it. "Sine carmine ullo, sine imitandorum carminum actu (*h*)." A Greek author has said "Poetry

(*h*) "Sine carmine ullo, sine imitandorum carminum actu, ludiones ex Etruria adciti, ad tibicinis modos saltantes haud indecoros motus more Tusco dabant."

T. Livii, lib. 7. c. 2. tom. 2. 471. ed. Drackenborch, 4to. 1738.

"Poetry is an eloquent dance (*i*);" but it was very different from the Etruscan dance, which was a mixture of religious exercise and theatrical entertainment. These sacred dancers were silent at Rome, because the verses they repeated were in a language that would not have been easily understood; but on their own national stages they declaimed and sung. The dramatic art had been indeed long cultivated in Etruria, and Varro hath preserved the name of Volumnius, a Tuscan Poet, the author of several Tuscan tragedies. It is imagined the Roman Tragic Poets Accius, Pacuvius, Cæcilius, and Varius, did not always dive into Grecian History for a subject for their muse, and that Melpomene sometimes sharpened her poniard in Etruria. But, unfortunately, both originals and their copies have perished; unfortunately, the Etruscan annals, which Dionysius of Halicarnassus sometimes quotes, are lost, and the language with them!

Architecture.

Architecture was another science in which the Etrurians distinguished themselves. Their style was noble, and at the same time simple; and we owe to them the invention of an order which still subsists under the Tuscan name. An invention so simple in its appearance gives us naturally the idea of exquisite judgment, and it could only have been the fruit of a decided taste for architecture, with great study, and reflection. Many superb

(*i*) Simonides.

perb edifices must have been built before it came into fashion and general use, and its beauties must have been often seen and admired. The Greeks and Tuscans have been the only authors of a similar invention, for the Romans, with their Composite order, which is of little consequence, have no pretensions to the honour; and the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Peruvians, and Mexicans, had no idea whatever of what is termed an Order. These different people had neither any rule of proportion, nor any fixed or permanent design of building; and their palaces and temples at Memphis, Babylon, Nineveh, Suza, Persepolis, and Mexico, were constructed in capricious and accidental forms. The eye of the spectator was to be astonished without an attempt to satisfy it. The remark on the nations just mentioned will apply with equal truth to the Chinese and Japanese. A circumstance which happened at the end of the last century in France, when it was particularly happy in the number of great men, proves the difficulty of any such invention. Warmed with a noble emulation of introducing some innovation which might do honour to their country, Messrs. Mansard, Levau, D'Orbay, and Perrault, Members of the French Academy of Architecture, added a number of ornaments to the Corinthian Capital, and distinguished it by the FRENCH ORDER, or the GREAT FRENCH ORDER. The attempt failed, and the Order is forgotten.

The Marquis of Galliani, the author of an excellent

Italian translation of Vitruvius, has advised architects desirous of innovation, to confine themselves between the Corinthian and Tuscan Orders, "For nothing," he observes, "can be more rich than what is SUPERLATIVE, "and nothing less rich than what is POSITIVE." The proposition may not be strictly true, but nothing can be expected, in a rich style, richer and more beautiful than the Corinthian, and, in the simple style, more simple and agreeable than the Tuscan.—What the red and violet rays of light are to the optician, the Tuscan and Corinthian Orders will for ever be to the architect.

There have been, notwithstanding, writers who have been of opinion that the Tuscan, instead of being a new creation, was only a poor and paltry counterfeit of the Doric. The Etruscans were certainly acquainted with the Grecian Orders, which may be perceived from their earthen ware; and what is very singular, there is not a single instance in it of their own Order. Yet its extreme simplicity justifies the supposition, that it was prior to them all. Even the Doric may have been borrowed from the Tuscan, with the addition of some Grecian ornaments, from which it derives its whole variety. The Grecian Orders must have been gradually improved, and brought to perfection; and it could only have been by long experience and repeated observations that the art acquired its last perfection. In the ruins of the temple of the Samian Juno at Samos, the birth of the Ionic

Order

Order is still distinctly visible, and it has not many of the beauties which it afterwards received. Even three ages in the Doric have been believed to be discernible, the first having a great resemblance with the Tuscan, and being much more simple, as it has not any base.

There will not be any injustice in considering the Tuscan as the first, or, at least, second Order of Architecture.—Its masculine austerity neither admits of sculpture, nor any other ornament; and what has the appearance of heaviness is recompensed by its solidity, without which architecture has no real beauty.—In buildings where lightness is not immediately wanted the Tuscan Order is still adopted. Its proportions with the Corinthian may be studied in Vitruvius, for the latter was scarcely ever employed in any of the most celebrated edifices of antiquity; and the regular Tuscan order is in vain looked for amongst all the ancient monuments.—Diodorus Siculus has also attributed to the Etrurians, outer courts and porticos, to prevent the noise of passengers or servants and slaves being troublesome (*a*).

Rome, as has been mentioned, under its Kings and first Consuls, availed itself of Etrurian sculptors, and it probably employed Etrurian architects. The sons of Mars

(*a*) "Εν τε ταις οικιαις τα περιστοα, προς τας των θεραπευοντων οχλων ταραχας εξευρον ευχρηστιαν· ὧν τα πλειστα Ρωμαῖοι μιμησαμενοι και προς το καλλιστον αυξησαντες, μετηνεγκαν επι την ιδιαν πολιτειαν." *Diod. Sicul. tom.* 1. 362.

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Mars and Sylvia, though less ingenious than their neighbours, had erected vast piles of building before their connection with Greece; and in all likelihood they took their plans from a Tuscan school, and sent for the workmen from Clusium, who were so famous for their buildings. What may confirm the observation, is the resemblance of the ancient Roman edifices with those of Cortona, those on the mountain where Fesula stood, and in other parts of Tuscany. The style of these buildings was masculine and bold. It agreed exactly with the Roman character, but there is no occasion to argue from probabilities. The Circus, an immense pile, totally inconsistent with Rome in its infant state, but destined to be the presage of its future glory, was built by Tuscan architects. The first Capitol, erected by the Elder Tarquin, a work of grandeur and solidity, was Tuscan, as may be gathered from Livy's expression of the " Fabris undique ex Etruriâ ac-" citis (*b*)."

The canal by which the Albanian lake emptied itself, proved their knowledge in Hydraulics, levelling, and mensuration; a knowledge more particularly useful to them, when they were in possession of Cisalpine Gaul, for the purpose of conducting its tumultuous rivers, which in their floods required perpetual attention. It was cut through a mountain, and by this means the superfluity of water was carried off without doing any damage by its inundations.—Superstition chalked out the plan,

Good

(*b*) *T. Livii, lib.* 1. *c.* 56. *tom.* 1. 218. *ed. Drackenborch,* 4*to.* 1738.

Good Sense completed it.—To conceive the difficulty of the undertaking we have only to recollect that the Emperor Claudius intending from a whim to drain the Fucine Lake employed thirty thousand workmen during eleven years.

The Etrurians also furnished the Romans with the means of executing their principal common-shore or Cloaca Maxima, under the Elder Tarquin, a prince born in Etruria of a Tuscan mother, when they had made no progress in the arts, and Rome, Imperial Rome was an irregular mass of cottages,

"Romuleoque recens horrebat Regia culmo."

These famous reservoirs were built with a grandeur and solidity, and on such a perfect level as is astonishing both on their being first seen and on reflection. Justus Lipsius had great reason to say of them, "Ponimus cloacas "inter magnifica, et sordes has inter illos splendores;" and their remains even strike with admiration an Oriental imagination. They were carried by subterraneous excavations under the whole city of Rome, split into innumerable branches, which discharged themselves into the principal stream, and were wide and deep enough to admit of boats. On the side of each of these immense vaults there were passages for carts and waggons. They had openings also at certain distances to give light and air,

air, and when it became dark, lamps were used.—It was a picture wonderfully singular.—Under the Imperial city suspended in the air, people passed in carriages and her inhabitants sailed in boats.—Such public utility and magnificence were never in any other instance so happily combined. Perhaps of every construction in the world it was the most extraordinary that was ever undertaken, and the Egyptian Cryptes which were sepulchres, and according to Pausanias and Ammianus Marcellinus sunk 160 feet below the pyramids under the bed of the Nile, were not equal to it.

The immense edifice, known by the name of the Tomb of Porsenna, near Clusium, proved likewise the great talents of his subjects. This edifice was built with stone, and if we are to take the account of it from a fragment of Varro, it resembled the labyrinth of Dædalus in Crete. Time has laid it in the dust, but the walls of Cortona, Volterra, and Fondi, still subsist, formed of vast blocks of stone reared upon each other, without any regular joints, and without lime or cement of any kind. The walls of Tirynthus in Arcadia, according to Pausanias, are of a similar construction, and they appeared so extraordinary to the Grecians as to have been attributed to the Cyclops. But simplicity or ignorance in almost all countries has given to superior powers works of uncommon rarity and magnitude. In the little isle of Ghozzo, subject to Malta, walls of the same kind are to be seen, and

they

they are incontestibly Punic. Are we from thence to infer that these people copied each other? or are we to conclude, with greater reason, that they only followed nature, and adopted the arrangement they often met in the quarries which they worked? To these Arcadian, Punic, and Tuscan structures, however, the expression relative to the Appian way may be applied, "Videntur congeniti "non congesti Lapides."

Painting.

Painting was not what it had been, though it still existed in a state of languor at the ruin of the Western empire. The torrents which poured out of Scandinavia and the North had not wholly swept away this beautiful art, for Queen Tendelinda, a cotemporary of Pope Gregory the Great, directed a history of the Lombards to be painted for her. We cannot, however, have too low an opinion of the work, and in the night of the middle age even the palest flashes of genius were scarcely visible. Italy had called in Grecian artists, if artists they could be called, and Venice, some towns of Romania, and the ancient Exarchate of Ravenna have preserved some of their daubings. Barbarism was the predominant feature, and the obsequies of St. Ephraim, to be seen in the "Museo Sacro," a part of the Vatican, pass for the melancholy master-piece of the illegitimate descendants of Zeuxis. In general the style of these artists was as wretched as can be imagined. It had no order, no regularity, no shade, and was destitute of all the essential qualities

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qualities of the art. On a golden or a silver ground, (for as they could not make their works beautiful they made them rich), they satisfied themselves with tracing the first lineaments with any colour, but to every species of Relief, Shadow, or Shade, they were utter strangers. A strange and uncouth figure was stuck upon two legs, its eyes were without life or animation, and the hands terminated with a set of clumsy fingers, hanging from them in the most unnatural and ungracious manner. It would be too much honour to dignify these daubers with the name of painters, and they sink below a cypher in the scale of Piles.

Gui of Sienna was the first modern that we read of in history (*c*), and he had studied in their detestable school.

Cimabue.

Ciambue (*d*), a noble Florentine, who has been justly reckoned the father and restorer of the pencil, had no other models before his eyes, and though he improved upon them, his genius had been too much pinioned by the wretched instruction he had received to arrive at any great distinction. Every art was considered as a prodigy when he came into the world, and the age of Cimabue

was

(*c*) Monsr. Tenhove cites the following monastic line:

"Me Guido de Senis diebus depinxit amœnis,
Quem Christus lenis nullis velit agere pœnis."

But he does not inform his Readers from what reservoir he has taken it.

(*d*) Dante has made honourable mention of him in his fine reflection on the vanity of human glory, in the 11th Canto del Purgatorio.

was too easily persuaded that Painting had reached its utmost altitude. The celebrated Madona may be yet seen, which was fetched by a crowd in Florence from Cimabue's house, and carried with the sound of flutes and drums and with inexpressible joy to the place for which it was intended. The most essential service, however, the art received from him was his patronage of Giotto and the cultivation of his talents. Giotto (*a*) was the termination of Ambigiotto the name of a shepherd, that Cimabue accidentally discovered, whilst he was drawing his own flock by instinct. He quitted his flock, his pipe, and his crook, and became in those times a great man and the first true painter (*b*). In ours he would have little pretension

Giotto.

(*a*) "Giotto ebbe un ingegno di tanta eccellenza, che niuna cosa dà la natura, madre di tutte le cose, ed operatrice, col continuo girar de' cieli, che egli con lo stile, e con la penna, e col pennello non dipignesse, sì simile a quella, che non simile, anzi più tosto dessa paresse." *Decam. Gior.* vi. *Nov.* 5.

Lorenzo de' Medici erected a little monument to him in the church of St. Maria del Fiore at Florence: Politian supplied the inscription,

"Ille ego sum per quem Pictura extincta revixit,
Cui quam recta manus tam fuit et facilis.
Naturæ deerat nostræ quod defuit arti;
Plus licuit nulli pingere nec melius,
Miraris turrim egregiam sacro ære sonantem?
Hæc quoque de modulo crevit ad astra meo.
Denique sum JOTTUS, quid opus fuit illa referre?
Hoc nomen longi carminis instar erit."

(*b*) Vasari hath left the following account of Cimabue and his friend. "Ma per tornare a Cimabue, oscurò Giotto veramente la fama di lui, non altrimenti, che un lume grande faccia lo splendore d' un molto minore; percioche se bene fu Cimabue quasi prima cagione della rinovazione dell' arte della pittura. Giotto non dime-

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tension to either title. His figures were not without expression, his portraits were the best that had been seen for some centuries, and his landscapes had absolutely novelty to recommend them. The few remains of his works, which are to be found in different parts of Italy, and in particular at Florence, Padua, and the Campo Santo at Piso, without any powerful attractions, afford the connoisseur great pleasure as curiosities and relics. It is pretended that the Histories of the Revelations he painted at Naples, and of which there are yet some vestiges, that cannot be very lasting, were from the designs of his intimate friend Dante. This sacred book is not probably the school from which representations of visible forms should be taken, but in the middle age it was the prevailing fashion to study and extract from it. Mons[r]. Abausit informs us these pictures are embroidered with chandeliers and stars, have a bloody moon, a darkened sun, grashoppers with crowns, red dragons, and in a word are filled with strange enigmatical visions.

In Petrarch's will a picture of Giotto is mentioned, "whose beauties were unobserved by the ignorant, and "astonished the artist." "Cujus pulchritudinem ig-"norantes

no suo creato, mosso da lodevole ambizione, et ajutato dal Cielo, et dalla Natura, fu que gli, che andando piu alto col pensiero, aperse la porta della verità à coloro, che l' hanno poi ridotta à quella perfezzione, e grandezza in che la veggiamo al secolo nostro." *Le Vite de' piu Eccellenti Pittori. tom.* 1. 87. *4to. Fiorenza.* 1568.

"Stando Giotto, ancor giovinetto con Cimabue dipinse una volta in sul

"norantes non intelligunt, magistri autem artis stu- "pent." CHAP. IV.

The O of Giotto, which occasioned an Italian proverb (*c*), is one of those anecdotes of little moment that has been often mentioned, and may be compared to the celebrated, though almost unintelligible, dispute between Apelles and Protogenes. Benedict the IXth had sent to Giotto for one of his drawings, and he returned him only a complete circle, drawn with his pencil at a single stroke.

Gaddi, Stefano, and Giottino, Memmi, Buffalmacco, and Lorenzo de Bicci, were the principal pillars and support of Giotto's school.

Gaddi's colouring is said to have exceeded that of his master (*d*). This artist was the founder of the illustrious Florentine Gaddi.

naso d'una figura, che esso Cimabue havea fatta, una mosca tanto naturale, che tornando il mæstro per seguitare il lavoro si rimise piu d'una volta a cacciarla con mano, pensando che fusse vera, prima, che s'accorgesse dell'errore."
Vasari, tom. 1. 131—133. *4to. Fiorenza,* 1568.

(*c*) "Divolgatasi poi questa cosa, ne nacque il proverbio, che ancora è in uso dirsi a gli nomini di grossa pasta: 'Tu sei più tondo che l' O di Giotto.'"
Vasari, tom. 1. 123.

(*d*) "Taddeo adunque mantenne continuamente la maniera di Giotto, ma non però la migliorò molto, salvo, che nel colorito, ilquale fece piu fresco, e piu vivace, che quello di Giotto." *Vasari, tom.* 1. 180.

Florentine family of that name, which, after having given to the world a number of ecclesiastical princes, became extinct in the last century, and was since revived at Florence by the Pitti, more celebrated, but less illustrious.

Stefano (*e*) also surpassed his master, and from his abilities he was styled " The Ape of Nature."

Giottino (*f*), the son of Stefano, is said to have been first attentive to the harmony of colours, and to have been very careful of blending those which corresponded with each other.

Memmi.

If posthumous reputation is of any value, Memmi of Sienna owed his to the accident of being Petrarch's cotemporary and friend. Memmi drew his portrait, and also

(*e*) " Fu in modo Eccellente Stefano pittore Fiorentino, e discepolo di Giotto, che non pure superò tutti gl'altri, che inanzi a lui si erano affaticati nell'arte, ma avanzò di tanto il suo Maestro stesso, che fu, e meritamente, tenuto il miglior di quanti pittori erano stati in fino a quel tempo." *Vasari, tom.* 1. 140.

If we may judge from his epitaph, he excelled in correctness and colouring. " Stefano Florentino Pictori, faciundis imaginibus, ac colorandis Figuris nulli unquam inferiori. Affines mœstiss. Pos. Vixit annos xlix."

(*f*) " Fu dunque costui nella pittura si diligente e di quella tanto amorevole, che, se bene molte opere di lui non si ritrovano quelle nondimeno, che trovate si sono, erano buone, e di bella maniera, percioche i panni, i capegli, le barbe, e ogni altro suo lavoro furono fatti; e uniti con tanta morbidezza, e diligenza, che si vede, ch'egli aggiunse senza dubbio l'unione a quest'arte, e l'hebbe molto piu perfetta, che Giotto suo maestro, et Stefano suo padre havuta non haveano."

Vasari, tom. 1. 189.

also Laura's; and the Poet has immortalized the Painter in the famous sonnet,

"Quando venne a Simon l' alto concetto."

An ancient portrait of Laura is preserved in the house of Sade at Avignon, which is believed to be a copy of Memmi's original. Laura, in this portrait, has a crimson dress, with a yellow tulip in her hand, striped with red and white. She has a modest sweet countenance, though a little languishing.—The History of San Ranieri, at the Campo Santo of Pisa, is also in Memmi's style, which is not very marvellous. His drapery, though a little stiff, is not however despicable, and the character of his heads has some truth, but he seems to have drawn his portraits servilely and without warmth.

Such was the MANNER in the infancy of Painting. As the science advanced it acquired more taste and freedom, but truth and variety have rather suffered. Memmi and his good friends in their portraits varied very easily the characters of their heads.—In adopting more beautiful but imaginary ones, are we so sure of arriving at truth, and are our resources as extensive?—That divine beauty, which figures itself to the imagination, can appear but to the illuminated, and the common tribe of artists will perhaps find their interest in a subjection to visible and more certain rules.

Buffalmacco.

Boccacio's pen hath rendered the name of Buffalmacco more known than his own works would have done, notwithstanding Vasari speaks of them with credit. In the Decameron he is often mentioned, and the author relates, with a wit peculiarly his own, some pleasant sallies of the painter, and some tricks he played his foolish companion Calendri, and other dupes. Buffalmacco, and some artists of his time, inserted labels in the mouths of their figures, which, rude as the custom was, lasted some time, and was only abolished by degrees. The greatest masters indeed, ancient as well as modern, Polygnotes and Rafaello, occasionally thought two or three words necessary to explain the subject of their pencils, and they made no scruple of adding them where they were not of any inconvenience, and did no injury. In compliance with the usage, the celebrated picture of Rafaello's wife has on the centre of the bust, "I am Raphael's,"—"Sum "Raphaelis," an ingenious allusion, which may be understood in a double sense, and steals upon the heart of sensibility.

Bicci.

Lorenzo de Bicci, the favourite of the father of Cosmo de' Medici, was the last of Giotto's old school. His colossal figures appeared daring novelties to his cotemporaries, and though they may be necessary in certain situations, they have never been much admired. The merit of the ancient masters was reduced by many imperfections, yet they are entitled to considerable indulgence; and

and without pausing on their situation, and the times in which they lived, we shall be apt to do them some injustice. The art was then itself in a species of noviciate, through which it had to pass, and we ought to expect but sketches from their hands instead of finished pieces. They have the reputation of having begun the work, and their efforts may be considered as the smoke, mixed with a few fleeting sparks, that announced the approaching blaze. Vasari, in his History of Painting, has been in reality too lavish in his encomiums on the perfection of these ancient masters, but the details, which he enters into afterwards, prove very clearly how feeble their first efforts were.

Painting in Mosaic.

The Art of Painting in Mosaic was also known and perpetuated in the barbarous ages, or at least it had been long restored. Andrew Tasi, of Florence, the friend of Cimabue, had learnt it from Apollonius, a Greek artist, who worked at Venice, and he improved so much upon his master as to be considered by his cotemporaries as something more than mortal. Many of the artists, however, that have been mentioned, far surpassed him, and above all, Giotto.

The celebrated remaining piece over the great door of St. Peter's at Rome, is but a copy of the picture in Mosaic, known by the name of the "Navicella di Giotto," from St. Peter's little boat, tossed on the tempestuous ocean,

ocean, and the Apostle walking on the waves being introduced in it. Paul the Vth, Urban the VIIIth, and Innocent the Xth, divided the original, and under Alexander the VIIth, it was nearly quite defaced. The succeeding Pope endeavoured to repair it, and at last one of the Cardinals of the Barbarini family had it copied from the original design, and placed it in its present situation.

The artists in the time of Cosmo de' Medici advanced more rapidly towards perfection, but they are few in number. It will be necessary to mention only three, and by the omission of the rest nothing will be lost.

Paulo Uccelli.

Paulo Uccelli's manner was dry and harsh: he was no proficient in the choice of natural beauty, and the symmetry of his compositions rendered them cold. Notwithstanding these defects, the art received from him essential obligations. With the assistance of Manetti the Geometer, of whom something has been already said, he gave birth to linear perspective, on which the proportions an artist gives to his figures, according to the distance of their situation, is wholly founded. In the shortening of his figures, which includes another species of linear perspective, Uccelli was also excellent. Attached to what was his talent, he sacrificed every other object to his favourite part of the science, and drew his figures according to the most rigorous rules of perspective, which other artists

artists had as cautiously avoided, from their ignorance or little knowledge of the subject.

Vasari, in his life of Uccelli (*a*), has not given us a specimen of his usual impartiality, or rather flattering candour. Too sensibly alive to Uccelli's imperfections, he sees no merit, and, instead of being just, he endeavours to ridicule him, and raise a laugh at his expence (*b*).

The

(*a*) "Paulo Uccello sarebbe stato il piu leggiadro, et capriccioso ingegno, che havesse havuto, da Giotto in quà, l'arte del la pittura; se egli si fusse affaticato tanto nelle figure, et animali, quanto egli si affaticò, et perse tempo nelle cose di prospettiva. lequali ancor che sieno ingegnose, e belle, chi le segue troppo fuor di misura, getta il tempo dietro al tempo: Affatica la natura, et l'ingegno empie di difficultà, e be ne spesso di fertile, e facile, lo fa tornar sterile, e difficile, e se ne cava (da chi piu attende a lei, che alle figure) la maniera secca, et piena di proffili; il che genera il voler troppo minutamente tritar le cose: oltre, che bene spesso si diventa solitario, strano, malinconico, e povero: come Paulo Uccello, il quale dotato dalla natura d'uno ingegno sofistico, e sottile, non hebbe altro diletto, che d'investigare alcune cose di prospettiva, difficili, et impossibili; lequali ancor che capricciose fussero, e belle; l'impedirono nondimeno tanto nelle figure, che poi invecchiando, sempre le fece peggio. E non è dubbio, che chi con gli studii troppo terribili violentà la natura, se ben da un canto egli assottiglia l'ingegno, tutto quel, che fa, non par mai fatto con quella facilità, et grazia, che naturalmente fanno coloro, che temperatamente, con una considerata intelligenza piena di giudizio, mettono i colpi a luoghi loro, fuggendo certe sottilità, che piu presto recano adosso all'opere un non so che di stento, di secco, di difficile, e di cattiva maniera; che muove a compassione a chi le guarda, piu tosto, che a maraviglia."

Vasari, tom. 1. 268, 269.

(*b*) "La moglie, la qual soleva dire che tutta la notte Paulo stava nello scrittoio, per trovar i termini della prosper tiva, e che quando ella lo chiamava a DORMIRE, egli le diceva, ô che dolce cosa è questa PROSPETTIVA." *Vasari, tom.* 1. 274.

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Angelico.

The Dominican monk Angelico, acquired his surname from the heavenly appearance, " L' Angelico sembi-" ante (*c*)," which he gave to the heads of his saints and angels. Vasari, just cited, and who lived in the happiest days of the profession, speaks with rapture of a picture by this master, that he never saw without fresh pleasure. Angelico's reputation soon spread very far, and Pope Nicholas the Vth sent for him to Rome, where he painted an apartment in the Vatican. Botarelli, an able and judicious prelate, and the last editor of Vasari, conceived a high idea of his talents. " I was desirous," he says, " to judge by my own eyes, and I went to the Vatican, " where I found the room I wanted, contiguous to the " apartment painted by Rafaello, so completely forgot-" ten, that I was obliged to get in by the windows. But " I was amply repaid for my trouble, by the sight of An-" gelico's work, divided into twelve compartments, in as " high beauty, and as fresh as if it had been only finished " a few days. Its merit appeared to me equal to the " most perfect productions of the art." To Botarelli's authority might be aded that of Mons[r]. Grosley, under the signatures of two Swedish Gentlemen, if there had not been an error in it. " I was perfectly astonished," he observes, " at seeing some Fresco paintings on old " walls, performed in the fifteenth century, as I was told " by one Fra. Angelico, a Religious in this house. This " surname

(*c*) *Ariosto. Cant.* 1. 18.

"surname he had acquired by his excellency in painting "angels: his touch indeed appeared to have all Barocio "and Guido's delicacy and beauty (*d*)." But these paintings which Mons[r]. Grosley mentions were not the work of Angelico, but of the illustrious Bartolomeo Della Porta, commonly called Il Frate.

Masaccio.

All these artists that have been already criticised were, however, far inferior to the celebrated Florentine Masaccio, who died before his great talents were arrived at their full maturity, and at the early age of twenty-six. The science has more obligations to him than to all his predecessors. He seems indeed to have been the first painter who saw the art in its true point of view, and was fully sensible of the great principle that it is only a faithful representation of select subjects from Nature. Yet this great secret, without which the art is nothing, or very little, had not been revealed to any one. Masaccio's works appeared therefore to be animated and living; his attitudes had boldness, grace, and grandeur; the colours of his dresses were beautifully chosen, as well as harmoniously combined with the naked parts of his figures (*e*); his draperies fell in easy folds; and to the linear

(*d*) *New Observations on Italy, by two Swedish Gentlemen, translated into English by Nugent, vol.* 2. 293.

(*e*) "Dipinse le cose sué con buona unione, et morbidezza, accompagnando con le incarnazioni delle teste, et degli nudi, i colori de'panni: Iquali si dilettò di fare

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linear perspective of Uccelli he added a softening, and that aerial perspective which produces such beautiful effects.—Anibale Caro paid Masaccio a high compliment in telling him that he painted passions, life, and motion, and that Michelagnolo might come to his school and profit by it (*f*). Michelagnolo, in his youth, drew indeed from his Cartons; and Rafaello, the immortal Rafaello, did not scruple, when he ornamented the different apartments of the Vatican, to copy on one of the walls a noble composition of Masaccio.—Such an attention does great honour to the talents of this ancient artist, and from this circumstance alone we may regret more feelingly the loss of all his works.

Sculpture.

It would be an idle task to trace up Sculpture to its infancy in Tuscany.—Nicola of Pisa and Giovanni of Pisa belong to the 13th and 14th centuries. Andrea of Pisa, who died in 1345, surpassed them, but in the happy days of Cosmo de' Medici, marble and bronze began to breathe under the hands of his great favourite (*g*) the illustrious

con poche pieghe, et facili, come fa il vivo, e naturale. Il che è stato di grande utile a gl'artefici, et ne merita esse re comendato, come se ne fusse etato inventore." *Vasari, tom.* 1. 296.

(*f*) "Pinsi e la mia pittura al ver fù pari,
L'atteggiai, l'avvivai, le diedi il moto,
Le diedi l'affetto. Insegni il Buonaroto,
A tutti gli altri, e da me solo impari."

(*g*) "Fu tanto l'amore, che Cosimo portò alla virtù di Donato, che di continuo

Donatello.

lustrious Donatello. The merits of his principal works have no reference to the period in which he lived, for they now charm the present age, as much as they astonished his cotemporaries. A celebrated group, which he finished for the Signory of Florence and placed in the Arcade of the palace, represents Judith ready to cut off the head of Holophernes. It has great beauty, true Attic simplicity, and is also remarkable for its force of expression.—Character is distinctly marked.—Drunkenness, luxury, and sleep are admirably impressed on the head and figure of Holophernes, and on the face of Judith the triumph of her faith is finely visible. They, who from a principle of morality cannot approve of prostitution, perfidy, and assassination, are still in extacy with the Apocryphal heroine, and are captivated with the magick of the art (*h*).—After a long contemplation of this

lo faceva lavorar: et allo incontro bebbe tanto amore verso Cosimo Donato; ch'ad ogni minimo suo cenno indovinava tutto quel, che voleva, et di continuo lo ubbidiva." *Vasari. tom.* 1. 331.

"Il Scultore Donatello, animo e corpo di Cosimo."

Vasari. tom. 1. 77.

A strong and forcible expression.—Vasari has paid him the following great compliment. "Dando opera all'Arte del disegno, fu non pure scultore rarissimo, et statuario maraviglioso, ma pratico ne gli stucchi, valente nella prospettiva; et nell' Architettura molto stimato. Et hebbono l'opere sue tanta grazia, disegno, et bontà, ch'oltre furono tenute piu simili all'eccellenti opere degl'antichi Greci, et Romani, che quelle di qualunche altro fusse gia mai." *Vasari. tom.* 1. 327.

(*h*) "Fece per la Signoria di quella città un getto di metallo, che fu locato in piazza in uno arco della loggia loro: et è Giudit, che ad Oloferne taglia la testa; opera di grande eccellenza, et magisterio, la quale, a chi considerà la semplicità

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this superb group, the eye naturally descends towards the pedestal, and it is surprised with the inscription

"PUBLICÆ SALUTIS EXEMPLUM
CIVITAS POSUIT."

"It is very strange," observes a modern traveller, "that, when the Medicis came to be fixed in the sovereignty, they allowed of such a monument, and with "such an inscription; and that the people themselves never thought of paying their court to them, and manifesting their attachment by pulling down, or at least "removing

del di fuori nell'abito, et nello aspetto di Giudit, manifestamente scuopre nel di dentro, l'animo grande di quella Donna, et lo ajuto di Dio. Si come nell'aria di esso Oloferne, il vino, et il sonno, et la morte nelle sue membra, che per havere perduri gli spiriti si dimostrano fredde, et cascanti," is Vasari's description of this statue. *Vasari. tom.* 1. 330.

His funeral was a public one, and the following are his epitaphs.

"Scultura. H. M. A. Florentinis fieri voluit Donatello. Utpote homini, qui ei quod jam diu optimis artificibus multisque seculis, tum nobilitatis, tum nominis acquisitum fuerat, injuriave tempor. Perdiderat ipsa, ipse unus, una vita, infinitisque operibus cumulatiss. restituerit: et patriæ benemerenti, hujus restitutæ virtutis palmam reportarit."

"Excudit nemo spirantia mollius æra
Vera cano: cernes marmora viva loqui.
Græcorum sileat prisca admirabilis ætas
Compedibus statuas continuisse Rhodon.
Nectere namque magis fuerant hæc vincula digna
Istius egregias artificis statuas."

"Quanto condotta mano alla scultura
Gia fecer molti: or sol Donato ha fatto:
Renduto ha vita a'marmi, affetto, et atto:
Che piu, se non parlar può dar Natura?"

Vasari. tom. 1. 336.

" removing that perpetual signal to revolt and attempts " on the sovereign's person (*i*)." This species of enigma is not indeed sufficiently explained by the respect the Florentines entertained for the works of their great masters, because the inscription might have been effaced without any sacrilegious injury to the group. We need not be surprised after this to have read of the statue of Charles the Ist, at the Royal Exchange of London with the

" EXIT TYRANNUS REGUM ULTIMUS."

Sculpture in a moral sense is meritoriously employed to perpetuate the memory of statesmen and heroes, who have served or saved their countries, and kings that have blessed their subjects. The Venetians directed Donatello to cast an equestrian statue in bronze of their general Gattimelata in Padua, and the horse and rider are equally admirable. The impetuous courser does not indeed move from his ignorance of living, but Pietro de' Cortona's observation on the horse of Marcus Aurelius may be applied to him with equal propriety and truth (*k*).

The St. George of Donatello is also another masterpiece, and in the true Grecian style. It has furnished Father

(*i*) *New Observations on Italy, vol.* 2. 279.

(*k*) The Abbè Du Bos hath given the anecdote. " Pierre de Cortone adressoit la parole toutes les fois qu'il passoit dans la Cour du Capitole, en lui disant par un enthousiasme pittoresque : Avances donc : ne sçais-tu pas que tu es vivant."
Reflexions Crit. sur la Poesie, &c. &c. tom. 1. 375. 4*to*. 1755.

Father Bocchi with the materials for a thick volume, and is in the number of those statues which the Italians call "Precettive" or models of the most finished and commanding order. Donatello, notwithstanding, gave the preference to his Zuccino, an old man with a bald head in one of the niches of the Campanile at Florence, and considered it as the first of all his works. The merit of his Basso Relievo equalled the beauty of his statues, but in Basso Relievo the two doors of the Baptistery at Florence are without a rival. They were Lorenzo Ghiberti's, and finished in 1424, and both the design and execution have been never since exceeded. Michelagnolo is said to have declared these doors to be fit for the entrance of paradise (*l*), and Count Algarotti added that artists should go on a pilgrimage to Florence, when they had nothing else to admire. Ghiberti's characteristic excellence was his complete knowledge of Relief, and the good sense by which he avoided the two opposite shoals that had been fatal to many of the ancient, as well as modern sculptors.

Lorenzo Ghiberti.

Rossi's collection with the title of "Admiranda veteris "Sculpturæ vestigia" contains a number of Basso Relievo,

(*l*) The following lines are supposed to have been written on the occasion.

"Dum cernit valvus aurato ex ære nitentes,
In templo Michael Angelus obstupuit.
Attonitusque diu, sic alta silentia rupit;
O divinum opus: O Janua digna Polo!"

evo, which prove the ancient sculptors knowledge of perspective. The plate in particular of the Basso Relievo under the "Luctus Funebris," which was preserved in the Barberini palace, furnishes the completest evidence, as we not only see an edifice diminishing but also actually receding in exact perspective with even the middle of the roof.—If Lorenzo Ghiberti knew how to secure himself against the reproaches deserved by the workmen of the Roman Columns in Virgil's allusion of the

"Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,
Credo equidem: vivos ducent de marmore vultus (*a*),"

he was also on his guard against too much refinement. What he principally desired was to exhibit in his works those distances alone, that might be expressed by a full Relief, a half Relief, and the Basso Relievo. To give either an immense depth, or a vast distance, is incompatible with such works; and he succeeded, because he had confined himself within the bounds of propriety. Yet it is what some modern as well as ancient artists have attempted, and they have failed, as the ingenious and learned Mr. Webb has shown with great taste and judgment in his Dialogue on the Clear Obscure (*b*).

Luca

(*a*) *P. Virgilii Æneid. lib.* 6. 848.

(*b*) *Inquiries into the Beauties of Painting*, 114.

Luca della Robbia.

Luca della Robbia, another Florentine artist, returned to the ancient Tuscan method of modelling in clay. Applying his whole thoughts to the discovery of a process which might give it hardness and solidity, and continuing his experiments with a perseverance, which always at last succeeds where success is possible, he found the means of protecting his works with a coat that effectually secured them. This led to the discovery of a mode of colouring, and his reputation became so much established that his manufacture was soon an article of commerce. His family inherited the secret, but after the death of another Robbia, in 1553, it was lost, without the probability of being recovered, and every idea of it is now forgotten.

The fall of the Western Empire had been as fatal to architecture as to the other arts and sciences, and it sunk into a state of neglect from which it did not recover during many centuries. The Visigoths reduced it to such a state of barbarism, that proportion, correction of design, and utility, were wholly unregarded. A new system was introduced from this abuse, which is distinguished by the name of the ancient Gothic, and its edifices resembled rather caverns than palaces or temples. Whatever can be supposed to be the heaviest and the flattest forms its character; and if the Edda, the Islandic Poem translated by Monsr. Mallet, had been any thing but a collection of Gothic or Celtic tales, Gothic architecture might be supposed

posed to have been the subject of the Twenty-first. Some gigantic artist was to construct a temple for Odin and their other Deities, having stipulated to receive, besides the Sun and Moon, some favours from their Goddess Fregeia, the Venus of the North, for his reward, and when he had reared the edifice, Thor, another Deity, destroyed him with a club.—By degrees architecture changed its appearance and became too light. Buildings were then rather like castles of cards than structures of stone or marble. Lightness and solidity should however be constantly united, and a building should not only be solid, but have the outward appearance of solidity. The masters in this branch of science consulted at this period only elegance, and introduced a profusion of ornaments, till then unknown, partly from an opposition to the taste of their predecessors, and partly from a wish of copying the Arabian or Moorish style of architecture, in the palace of Alhambra in Grenada, and other buildings. This style was brought by the Moors on their Spanish conquests from the South, as the Goths had imported theirs from the North.

At the period of the capture of Constantinople there was a Grecian architect, of the name of Christobulus, who was employed by Mahomet the IId, in the construction of a Mosque on the ruins of the Church of the Holy Apostles, which nearly rivalled that of St. Sophia. The latter had been built in the reign of Justinian, and he

 was

was so transported with it as to believe it was superior to Solomon's Temple. Yet it was not to be compared to the beautiful structures of antiquity. Doubtless it is the least imperfect of the Mosques at Constantinople, and its situation, on a rising ground, which gradually falls, and loses itself in the sea at the point on which the Seraglio stands, is the most advantageous in the universe. The inside of the dome is beautiful, and the building has some other recommendations; but, viewed on the outside, it is a heavy, massy pile. The front is far from being superb, the dome is supported by four frightful arches with clumsy towers, and the columns are not of any regular order. In a word, Isodorus and Anthemius, the architects, succeeded only in the creation of an immense monster by a violation of all the rules of architecture.

The Italians of the middle age could only copy the architecture of the Lower Grecian Empire, the best model they had before their eyes, and the Venetians deserve some praise for building their Church of St. Mark on a Grecian plan. Four centuries before the fall of Constantinople, Pisa employed a Grecian artist of the name of Buschetto Dulichio on its Cathedral. It was enriched by a great number of columns, and other ornaments of marble, and most of them were antiques, but they were disposed with such taste and judgment that Buschetto Dulichio acquired great credit from the work. His Tuscan scholars adopted his manner, and the famous Tower of Pisa

was

was erected in the following century. Some are of opinion that it was built from the caprice of the architect in its present leaning position; others are very confident that it is a deception of the eye by a secret contrivance; and there are still others who persist in thinking it leans in whatever aspect it is viewed. There is no occasion to search for mystery where mystery has not existed, and little doubt can be entertained of its reclining appearance having proceeded from a defect in the foundation. The building seems even to be twisted and endeavouring to rectify itself, and as the accident was soon discovered in all probability the architect attempted to correct it.— If the circumstance had not been so very clear, it might have been imagined that the absurdity was voluntary, and by design. The progress of genius being more rapid than that of taste, the Italians affected singularities, and took those liberties in architecture that were ridiculous. One example may be cited, from twenty others, of the Tower of Pavia, which the Lombards called Torre del Pite in Zo, where the top is larger than the base.

Marchion of Arezzo, Faccio of Florence, and Niccolò of Pisa, were sculptors as well as architects, and they affected a multiplicity of ornaments in their buildings, under the idea that they added to their elegance and perfection. This idea however they only took up with the new Gothic architects, and with the exceptions of Canterbury

terbury Cathedral, the Abbey of St. Nicaise at Rheims, and a few others, their style of building was infinitely superior. On this side of the Alpes, piles were in general heaped on other piles, and what the Chancellor de l' Hôpital said of the Pope's palace at Avignon

"————— moles miranda Palatî
Materiâ et sumptu; minimum aut nihil artis in illo est,"

is perfectly descriptive of them, whilst many of the buildings at Florence, Pisa, and Sienna, discover a taste and elegance, and every advantage such a defective theory could possibly admit. Yet how far do even the most unexceptionable of these buildings fall short of the sublimity and beauty of the ancient Grecian architecture!

Instead of being satisfied with that sobriety of ornament of which the Grecian artists set them the example, the Tuscans, and other masters of those times, could not renounce their little trifling embellishments, and multiplied them almost to infinity. Even the Friezes were placed at twice the height they ought to have been, for the sole purpose of giving space, where the artist might crowd a multitude of decorations, which it was impossible either to define or to describe.—They were in fact enigmas for the eye. It might at first perhaps be flattered, it was never satisfied. Turning to the Grecian buildings, it instantly perceives the agreement of their parts, and is in

ecstacy at the harmony with which they all conspire to render the whole complete and perfect.

The only remains of ancient Roman architecture of which Florence has to boast is the Baptistery, which was originally a Temple of Mars, the patron of the city, supplanted by St. John the Baptist.

Towards the end of the 13th century they began from the designs of Arnolfo di Lapo the cathedral at Florence called St. Maria di Fiori. This church then passed for the most beautiful one in Italy. Its outside was incrusted with black and white marble, and was not less astonishing for its circumference, its elevation, its lightness, and solidity, than its proportions. Arnolfo finished the whole except the cupola, and he appears to have made a progress in the art beyond the age in which he lived. Arnolfo di Lapo.

Giotto's talents were not confined merely to the pencil, and the pallet. Florence is indebted to him for the Campanile. This beautiful structure is almost covered with marble, and thrown into compartments. Its tower also is very elegant, and deserved in the opinion of Charles the Vth, a case for its preservation. Giotto drew the design, and according to his plan, the Campanile was to have been carried to a more considerable height, and terminated in a pyramid with four faces. He only lived to see a part of it built, and the rest was finished

finished by other artists, who adhered in a great measure to his model,

> "Egregiam turrim cernis sacro ære sonantem,
> Hæc quoque de modulo crevit ad astra meo,"

but they raised it only to a trifling height, and substituted a turret in the room of Giotto's intended pyramid.

L'Orgagna.

L'Orgagna, who should have been taken notice of amongst the painters, and whose last judgment may be seen at the Campo Santo of Pisa, was also an architect. He first struck out the invention of Arcades, or speaking with more propriety, he borrowed them from the Greeks, and he extended also the limits of his art. This art was, notwithstanding, to be then considered rather in its progress than reduced to any fixed rules, and more proportion in all its parts with more symmetry in the whole were still wanting. In the celebrated age of Cosmo de' Medici, Filippo Brunelleschi the restorer of real architecture appeared. Vitruvius, the only writer of antiquity on the subject, who was then dragged out of the dust, afforded him great assistance.—The obscurest oracle speaks clearly to an intelligent inquirer.—This Latin author wrote sensibly, we must admit, and entered with much judgment into curious details respecting the construction of buildings, but in the ornamental part of architecture and its different orders his talents are not very

striking.

striking. The part of his treatise, however, on profiles and linear demonstrations, the most valuable of the work, is lost. Brunelleschi soon discovered that Vitruvius could not supply him with all he wished to know, and he set out immediately to satisfy his thirst at the fountain-head. In Rome, ancient Rome, which had been most inconceivably neglected, he acquired all the knowledge that he wanted. Baths, aqueducts, temples, arches, amphitheatres, the Colliseum, nothing escaped his compass and his pencil. Surprised at such indefatigable curiosity the Italians supposed him to be busied in the search after hidden treasure, and gave him the name of "The Treasure-Hunter." Under his hands regularity and proportion again appeared with all their beauties. The foreign assistance he had received from Vitruvius and ancient Rome had not diminished his reputation, for without taste and genius the best instructions and the best of models are of little service. In proportion to his talents an artist profits by his observations, and as the ingenious Abbè de Bos has remarked "Ce superbe étalage "d'antiquités, qui rendent Rome la Ville la plus auguste "de l'Univers, ressemble à ces boutiques où l'on étale "une grande quantité de pierreries: en quelque profu-"sion que les bijoux y soient en montre, on n'en raporte "chez soi qu'à proportion de l'argent qu'on avait porté "pour faire emplette."

The famous octagon cupola of the cathedral at Flo-

rence, which has served as a model for all succeeding ones, was Brunelleschi's most original work and masterpiece. Michelagnolo, after examining minutely its admirable proportion and the lightness of its plan, gave it the name of "La Sposa," and being employed in the execution of a cupola for St. Peter's at Rome, declared he would not copy that at Florence, though to excel it was not in his power (*a*). His modesty did him credit, for nothing is to be compared with his dome at St. Peter's, and the Romans may with some reason ask their fellow-citizens on quitting Rome, "Dove ritroverete questa di-"vina cupola," for its equal is not to be found.

Brunelleschi's admirable designs had, however, a little mixture of Gothic, from the necessity he was under of conforming himself to Arnolfo di Lapo's Work, yet there were only three ancient remains of a similar structure, those of the dome of the temple of Minerva at Athens, the Panthèon at Rome, and St. Sophią at Constantinople. These three cupolas, of which Brunelleschi had only seen the second, though high enough in the interior, had a low, flat, and awkward appearance on the outside. Brunelleschi remedied the defect by a double dome.—It was also from one of Brunelleschi's plans that Cosmo de' Medici built at his own expence the church St. Lorenzo, the first of those majestic edifices built on the great principles of architecture.

Mi-

(*a*) "Come te non voglio, meglio di te non posso."

Michelozzi was the Florentine architect who resembled most Brunelleschi in abilities. He built the convent of St. Mark, one of the most beautiful and best distributed of any in Italy, and it was from one of his designs that Cosmo de' Medici rebuilt the old palace of the family. Amongst the noble houses of the private families of Florence this palace still holds the first rank, and in many circumstances surpasses them not by the extent of ground it occupies, but by its elegance and simplicity (*b*). One of the most ingenious of modern travellers

(*b*) An inscription was added in 1715 by the Riccardi Family, who purchased it from the Grand Duke Ferdinand IId in 1659.

"HOSPES

Ædes cernis fama celeberrimas. Pulcherrimas atque magnificas. A Cosmo Medice patre patriæ. Michelotio architecto erectas A. S. plus minus CIↃ CCCC.XXX. In quibus magnus ille senex successoresque sui in R. P. Florentina principes. Et Alexander dux R. P. Flor. Petrus Medices Cosmi I. tertius filius habitarunt. Hic a senatu Florentino Cosmus Medices dux Florentiæ plenis liberisque suffragiis creatus ad quinque annos sedem suam ac regiam habuit. Captivos montis Murli victoriæ testes vidit. Nuptias celebravit. Regiam stirpem feliciter hodie regnantem fundavit. Variis temporibus Romani pontifices. Romani imperatores. Reges. Reginæ. Aliique principes. Innumerique proceres hospitio excepti. Leo X. P. M. initu Bononiam redituque Carolus V. Imperat. cui oratores tunetani regis hic solenne tributum solverunt. Carolus VIII. Galliarum rex. Carlota Cypri regina, et Sarmatiæ regina. Thomæ regis filia. Fridericus princeps Salerni. Ferrandi regis Neapolitani filius et Maria Hippolyta dux Calabriæ. Galeatius Maria Sfortia Mediolani dux. Hic litteræ Latinæ Græcæque restauratæ. Mutæ artes excultæ. Platonica philosophia restituta. Academia Florentina a Cosmo I. Vernaculæ Etruscæ linguæ cultui acrata. Semper hi parietes columnæque eruditis vocibus resonuerunt. Ædes hasce. Tantæ gloriæ vix capaces. Gabriel Chianni et Rivalti Marchio. Senatoris Francisci Riccardi F. a Ferdinando II. M. E. D. A. CIↃ. IↃC LVIII. Comparatas. In posticâ parte auxit. Franciscus Marchio. Cosmi Marchionis F. Gabrielis supradic-

CHAP. IV. lers pretends that on shewing this palace and the Jesuit's convent, which is opposite, it is usual to observe "one was "the Cradle of Letters, and the other their Grave (*c*)." De Lande, in his account of Italy, has denied the fact (*d*), and it is but generous to allow that the society

"Dum vita manebat

always produced persons of great talents and distinction. At present

"Fulmine

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ti. Ex fratre N. et heres. Vetustam ædium magnificentiam æmulatus. Illas sacello sacris reliquis referto. Bibliotheca. Museo. Signis. Scalptis cælatisque gemmis. Veteribus nummis. Anaglyphis. Picturis instructas. Intus forisque duplo ampliavit. Veterem partem in meliorem formam redegit. Ornavit. Ornat. A. CIↃ. IↃCC. XV.

HOSPES

Mediceas olim ædes. In quibus non solum tot principes viri. Sed et sapientia ipsa habitavit. Ædes omnis eruditionis. Quæ hic revixit. Nutrices. Nunc etiam ad eruditum luxum antiquitatis et elegantiarum thesaurum.

GRATUS VENERARE."

(*c*) *New Observations on Italy, vol.* 2. 283. 1.

(*d*) Yet the following verses are to be found in a satire by I. Pifferi di Montagna.

"· · · · Quanto ben disse,
E quanto è memorabil la parola,
Del dotto Lazzerini, allorchè Fisse,
Le pupille ebbe a vostra Casa, e allato,
Il tetto vide, ove il gran Cosmo vissel
Esclamô, volto a questo : Ecco il beato,
Soggiorno al mondo; in cui virtù si nacque,
Ea sua cuna dal Ciel fù destinato,
Ma il vostro a lui si giustamente spiacquè,
Che il ravvisò delle scienze avello,
E le gota rigò di tepide acque."

"Fulmine dejecti fundo volvuntur in imo."

When Cosmo de' Medici had determined to rebuild his palace, he consulted Brunelleschi, who gave him a most superb design. Notwithstanding the greatness of Cosmo's mind the plan appeared to him too extensive and too sumptuous, and perhaps he was at the same time a little apprehensive of the envy of his fellow-citizens. When Brunelleschi began his plan he thanked his stars that as he had a palace to build, he was employed by a person who had the power and inclination to finish it, when he was informed of Cosmo's resolution he destroyed the design from vexation and resentment. It had been pretended that Cosmo de' Medici afterwards lamented that he had not followed Brunelleschi's ideas, at least the palace which he built is very faulty and open to much criticism. The windows and openings are ill contrived, the cornices are infinitely too heavy and massy, and there are many other imperfections. What a high opinion Cosmo de' Medici entertained of Brunelleschi's genius may be collected from one of his letters to Pope Eugenius the IVth. "Holy Father, I send you a "person, whose genius is so great, that if Providence "was to give him a chaos to arrange, he would accom- "plish it."—Yet this genius failed in a very easy enterprise at Lucca during the siege in 1430, where he made a mistake, by which the attack miscarried. He insisted the city might be inundated by turning the Sperchio out

of

of its course, and on the attempt being made, great damage was done to the Florentine camp, and the defence of the city even strengthened. Notwithstanding the miscarriage Brunelleschi continued to be considered as the first engineer of his time, but he was here obliged to trust to his own resources, for he had neither plans to copy nor precepts for his direction. In the remains of some Roman fortifications the curiosity of the antiquarian may be amused, though the military engineer cannot receive any information. The Chevalier Folard has with great truth observed, "Quand il s'agit d'architecture militàire, "Vitruve ne sait ce qu'il dit."

Inlaid work was familiar also with the Ancients, and it served to decorate their beds, their tables, and furniture. If it had not, however, been entirely lost, it was but little known till Brunelleschi and his fellow-citizen Benedetto de Majoro again brought it into use. They gave the first modern models of this humble Mosaic, but though they were very beautiful, they were only in black and white.

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DEATH *of Giovanni, the Son of Cosmo de' Medici—Death of Piero de' Medici—Lorenzo and Giuliano declared Chiefs of the Republic—Conspiracy of the Pazzi—Assassination of Giuliano—Punishment of the Conspirators—Renato Pazzi—The Pope and Ferdinand of Naples commence Hostilities against Florence—Distress of Florence—Lorenzo de' Medici embarks for Naples—Succeeds in his Negotiation—Returns with Glory, and establishes the Peace of Italy—Patronises the Arts and Sciences—Pico Mirandula—Angelo Politiano—Observations on his Works—Disputes amongst the learned—Luigi Pulci—Luca Pulci—Italian Poetry—Andronicus of Thessalonica—Marullus—Borchiello—Donato Acciajuoli—Christoforo Landino—Savonarola—Mariano Quinazano—Platonic Academy—Lorenzo di Volpaja—Civil Law—Laurentian Library.*

LORENZO DE' MEDICI

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COSMO DE' MEDICI had married Contesina Bardi, of a noble and illustrious family, which had been long distinguished, and still exists at Florence. Francesco Sachetti, the author of three hundred little novels, has mentioned in the sixty-third an anecdote of the Painter Giotto (*a*), which proves its antiquity, but it was still more celebrated for its commerce. The whole trade of France and England was in the hands of the Bardi, or their partners the Peruzzi, and their bankruptcy in 1345, whether it

(*a*) Vasari hath also preserved the anecdote: " E dei essere grande bestia, che chi ti dicesse, chi se tu? Appena co saresti dire: e giugni qui, e di dipignimi l'arme mia: se tu fussi stato de' Barbi, sarebbo basto, che arme porti tu? di qua se tu? chi furoni gl'antichi tuoi." *Vasari, tom.* 1. 182.

it was owing to imprudent speculations, or their losses by the Kings of England and Sicily, was an event that both astonished and alarmed Europe. To whatever cause their failure might be attributed, they laboured under general censure, and were the objects of universal indignation. Villani, an historian of the times, has feelingly lamented both his own and the public sufferings. "It was the greatest misfortune," he says, "that ever happened to Florence, considering the immense sums which were lost. —Oh, cursed and insatiable avarice! which tempts the citizen to trust his property to great merchants, and not only his own but that of his friends, by which they are equally undone. The ruin became so general that Florence was entirely without money, the little excepted in the hands of usurers, who took advantage of the public misery.—But cities and nations are punished by Omnipotence, as it was declared by the voice of our Lord and Saviour in the Gospel. 'In peccato vestro moriemini.' If the Bardi, after a compromise with their creditors, should be able to recover either a part or the whole of their demands on the Kings of England and Sicily, they will be again abundantly rich, and their wretched creditors . . . . . . but let us quit the dreadful subject; I am myself one of the unfortunate, and a sufferer by the revolution of the wheel of Fortune, which turns and re-turns this miserable world as it pleases."

Roberto

Roberto de' Bardi, Chancellor of the Church of Paris, Canon of Nôtre Dame, and an intimate friend of Petrarch, was of great service to literature and religion by the preservation of St. Augustin's sermons, which would otherwise have irrecoverably perished. After the Florentine fashion he went very young to Paris to enter on his studies; and Petrarch tells us he made such a progress in them, that he was greatly esteemed by the heads of the seminary; that he had uncommon merit, was an able philosopher, and a profound divine. Yet these expressions are to be weighed in the cautious scale of criticism, and they have an ideal value which relates only to the fourteenth century. At the assembly of Vincennes, Roberto de' Bardi appeared with reputation, where the opinion of the Infallible John the XXIId on the Beatific Vision, was condemned. The literary historian Philip Villani assures us, that Roberto de' Bardi discovered thirty-eight erroneous propositions in St. Thomas D' Aquinas, yet Villani has perhaps confounded him with Robert Kildubardi, Archbishop of Canterbury. Such is at least the opinion of the Count de Mazucchelli.

Cosmo had two sons, Giovanni and Piero, by Contesina Bardi, and he had a natural son by a mistress.

Giovanni de' Medici was one of the Florentine ambassadors sent in 1455, to take the necessary oaths to Calixtus the IIIrd, who succeeded Nicholas the Vth. He

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Death of Giovanni, the son of Cosmo de' Medici.

was Cosmo's favourite son, on whom all his future hopes and expectations rested; but an early and premature death, in 1463, tore him from his arms. Overwhelmed with grief, Cosmo wept on the precarious tenure of all earthly happiness, and as he traversed his spacious apartments, struck with the silence and the void which reigned around him, he frequently cried out, " How vast a pa-" lace, and what a family is only left!"—Cornelius Nepos has recorded the singular felicity of Dionysius of Syracuse, who died at an advanced age, without having buried any of his numerous children (*b*), and they only who are parents can feel a parent's loss!

Giovanni de' Medici married Cornelia de Alessandri, by whom he had only one son, who died an infant.

Piero de' Medici therefore succeeded to Cosmo's fortune and authority at Florence. It is a common observation, that when wealth and power have once established themselves, their advances are for some time progressive. If Piero de' Medici had not this satisfaction, and did not even without difficulty retain the station he had inherited, it arose from some false steps at his entrance into

(*b*) " Hic quum virtute tyrannidem sibi peperisset, magna retinuit felicitate, majorque annos sexaginta natus decessit, florente regno. Neque in tam multis annis cujusquam ex stirpe sua funus vidit, quum ex tribus uxoribus liberos procreasset, multique ei nati essent nepotes."

Cor. Nepos. de Regibus. 589, 590. 8*vo*. *L.B.* 1773.

into public life, and the pernicious counsels of a treacherous and pretended friend. Cosmo, in the decline of life, either from a high opinion of Diotisalvi Neroni's abilities, or gratitude for his supposed attachment to his interests, had strongly recommended him to his surviving son, who wished to shew every respect to his illustrious father's memory (*c*). Cosmo had probably been deceived by the warmth of Neroni's protestations, and Piero de' Medici lived to repent his employment of such a minister.

Diotisalvi Neroni joined to ambition a great meanness of soul, and as he was desirous of supplanting Piero de' Medici, he attempted to ruin him by every artifice and fraud. An opportunity of trying one stratagem soon presented itself. Cosmo's immense liberalities had occasioned an apparent derangement of his finances, and the son, on his little embarrassment, had recourse to his perfidious confidant, who advised, without hesitation, a demand of the several sums Cosmo had lent to almost every rank of persons. The expedient, however plausible, was

(*c*) "Piero suo figliuolo rimaso erede delle sostanze e dello stato del padre, chiamò a se Messer Diotisalvi Neroni, uomo di grande autorità, e secondo gli altri cittadini riputatissimo, nèl quale Cosimo confidava tanto che e' commise morendo a Piero, che delle sostanze e dello stato al tutto secondo il consiglio di quello si governasse. Dimostrò pertanto Piero a Messer Diotisalvi la fede, che Cosimo aveva avuto in lui. E perchè voleva ubbidire a suo padre dopo morte come aviva ubbidito in vita, desiderava con quello del patrimonio e del governo della città consigliarsi."

Machiavelli, tom. 1. *lib.* 7. 354.

was a dangerous one, and it excited a general dissatisfaction. They who were only asked for what had been lent to them imagined they were as ill-treated as if their own property had been attempted to be taken from them, and Florence seemed to have adopted the maxim mentioned by Mademoiselle de Montpensier, "That Kings must "continue giving, if they mean to be respected." Neroni watched with pleasure the rising storm, congratulated himself on the apparent success of his treachery, attached himself to the enemies of the Medici, and swelled, as far as he was able, the popular tide against them.

Luca Pitti, Agnolo Acciajuoli, and Niccolò Soderini, were equally disaffected, or had the same object in view, though they were influenced by very different motives. Pitti was desirous of maintaining or recovering his tyrannical authority, and burnt with envy and resentment on its being eclipsed by the more constitutional power of the House of Medici.—The recollection of a personal injury (*d*) rankled in the breast of Acciajuoli, and from the motive of revenge he was anxious for Piero's ruin.

Niccolò

(*d*) Machiavel has explained the grounds of his private quarrel. "Messer Agnolo coi Medici teneva particolari odi per tali cagioni. Aveva Raffaello suo figluolo più tempo innanzi presa per moglie l' Alessandra de' Bardi con grandissima dote. Costei o per i mancamenti suoi o per i difetti d' altri era dal suocero e dal marito maltrattata; onde che Lorenzo d' Ilarione suo affine, mosso a pietà di questa fanciulla una notte con di molti armati accompagnato la trasse di casa Messer Ag-

Niccolò Soderini alone acted, as it was said, on the purest principles of patriotism, and had no other object in view but his country's liberty. Under this specious pretext, however, they all disguised their purposes, and a great number of partisans were attracted by it.

No time, they were of opinion, was to be lost in the attempt, and they intended to surprise Medici at one of his country residences, where he had been detained by the gout. The son of Cosmo was in a precarious situation, without any knowledge of it, and his destruction seemed to be imminent, whilst he had not the least suspicion of being in any danger. One of the conspirators, fortunately for him, went and made an open avowal of the plot (*e*). Danger, when discovered, ceases almost to be danger, and Piero de' Medici, by an expeditious return to the city, at the head of a chosen troop of his friends, baffled the designs of his enemies, and took again possession of Florence, which he had nearly lost. The conspirators

nolo. Dolsonsi gli Acciajuoli di quest' ingiuria fatta loro da' Bardi. Fu rimessa la causa in Cosimo, il quale giudicò, che gli Acciajuoli dovessero alla Alessandra restituire la sua dote, e dipoi il tornare col marito suo all' arbitrio della fanciulla si rimettesse. Non parve a Messer Agnolo, che Cosimo in questo giudicio l' avesse come amico trattato; e non si essendo potuto contra Cosimo, deliberò contra il figliuolo vendicarsi." *Machiavelli, tom.* 1. *lib.* 7. 355, 356.

(*e*) "Trovavasi tra questi congiurati Ser Niccolò Fedini, il quale tra loro come cancelliere s'esercitava. Costui tirato da più certa speranza rivelò tutte le pratiche tenute dai suoi nimici a Piero, e la lista de' congiurati e de' soscritti gli portò." *Machiavelli, tom.* 1. *lib.* 7. 359.

rators saved themselves by a precipitate flight, Pitti excepted, who did not quit Florence, and experienced a severe reverse of fortune. He had the misery to see himself deserted, and his superb palace, which almost every citizen had contributed to raise, avoided as a Lazaretto. It remained unfinished, and the aspiring Pitti, in his old age, was exposed to public contempt; for the misfortunes which make a great and good man venerable, sink the weak and wicked to the degraded level that is their due.—Whilst Pitti was in agonies at the recollection of what he had been, and in despair at what he was, his friends busied themselves in preparations for a return to their country, from which they had been obliged to fly. Acciajuoli, who had taken refuge at Naples, sent a defiance to the Medici, and Venice espoused the cause of the exiled faction. Piero was supported by Galeazzo Sforza, Duke of Milan, the son and successor of Francesco, and by Ferdinand of Arragon, King of Naples.—After various military manœuvres, and many able movements, the rival forces came in sight of each other, and we have another memorable example of the little confidence that was to be placed on the resolution of Italian troops. A mutual panic seized both armies at the same instant, and they fled in contrary directions, without even the knowledge of each other's dastardly timidity. The Italian authors make no scruple of candidly acknowledging the fact, and there is some merit in the frank confession of their native cowardice. Truth ought to be the first con-

sideration

sideration of every writer; and, next to bravery itself, is the brave and ingenuous admission of the want of it.

Such is the general account that we receive from many historians, yet it is difficult to reconcile them with the narrative of Paulus Iovius. "It is supposed," he says, "that the General Coglione (*a*), in the war between the "Florentine exiles and the House of Medici, first intro-"duced the use of field-pieces, cannon having been till "then confined to the attack and defence of towns. They "were mounted on light carriages, and masked by a line "of troops, which, on a signal being given, opened, and "the cannon fired directly on the enemy." The prelate adds, "That it was a disgraceful and barbarous method "of attack, by which a shower of bullets was poured "upon a number of brave men, who were fighting hand "to hand, with sword and pike, so gloriously for their "country (*b*)." War has since changed its whole appearance,

(*a*) Jane the IId, Queen of Naples, made choice of Coglione for her galant, from his public specimens of strength and vigour. "Fuit Coleo corporis staturâ erectâ atque habili, adeoque formosus et agilis, ut Regina Joanna, INGENIO PROCACI mulier AVIDAQUE VIRORUM FORTIUM, Coleonis amore caperetur, quum eâ spectante cunctos in palæstrâ jactuque ferrei vectis et saltu corsuque certantes cum magno spectantium plausu superaret." (*Pauli Iovii*, *Illust. Vir. Eleg. lib.* 3. 133). We have heard of the "CONDITIONES ET NAUTICAS ET GLADIATORIAS" (*Hist. August* 30.) of the Empress Faustina, and Monsr. Rulhiere (*Hist. ou Anecdotes sur la Revolution de Russie en l' Annee* 1762), has lately illustrated the dark history of a Northern Cabinet on the same principles.

(*b*) "Eo autem bello quod adversus Mediceæ familiæ principatum à Florentinis

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pearance, and if the prelate had reason to complain of a few light field-pieces, of a very narrow bore, he must have been in astonishment and indignation at the trains of between four and six hundred pieces of heavy artillery, employed in the last German war of seven years. —On which ever side the truth may lie, it is certain the exiles and their allies, the Venetians, were compelled to evacuate Tuscany. Piero de' Medici acted only on the defensive, and the retreat of his enemies was to him attended with the consequences of a victory. His friends, flushed with success, were unable to support their good fortune with moderation, and proceeded to many unjustifiable acts of violence. Piero, indeed, enfeebled by a paralytic complaint, which had deprived him of the use of his limbs, and only left him the power of speech, was ignorant of what was passing, and an entire stranger to these flagitious excesses. They cautiously concealed them from him, under the full conviction that he would have had the resolution to suppress them, and that, notwithstanding

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exulibus in Gallia togata excitatum est, Coleo dux primus omnium instituisse dicitur, ut tormenta adversus hostium aciem emitterentur, quum antea in expugnandis tantum defendendisque urbibus usui esse solerent. Spingardas enim ita vocabant minora tormenta tricubitalis longitudinis, quæ glandem pruni majoris magnitudine violenter effunderent. Hæc parvis curribus inserta post acies advehi, et signo tuba dato quo sua agmina relicto intervallo hinc atque illinc panderentur in oppositos hostes dirigi jubebat. Quo invento ad Ricardinam Bononiensis agri hostilem aciem ita perterruit, ut quum Spingardæ pila Herculi Ferrariæ principi calcaneum detersisset, malignè et barbaro more Coleo fecisse diceretur; qui viros fortes gladio atque hasta pro virtute et gloria dimicantes, inusitata atque horribili pilarum procella sternendos curaret." *Pauli Iovii, Illust. Vir. Eleg. lib.* 3. 133.

standing his weakness and infirmities, the goodness of his heart would not have suffered him to have connived at their conduct.

It has been pretended that his intention was to have recalled the exiles, and to have endeavoured to have attached them to his interest by gratitude; and it is even insisted that Acciajuoli was sent for to arrange the plan of the general reconciliation. The generous project was not however carried into execution, as Piero de' Medici died in 1471.—During the short space of time he appeared on the public stage his character was unsullied, and he enjoyed the reputation of being a son worthy of his illustrious progenitor; but the whole of the few years that he survived him had been embittered by the public dissensions, and his constant infirmities prevented any vigorous display of his personal abilities.

The Florentine historians have given him the name of "Il Gottoso," or the Gouty. He was only in his fifty-third year, but his long and severe illness had rendered him insensible to every enjoyment. In this deplorable situation life could have no value; he looked with consolation towards its approaching end, and considered a release from his painful existence as a blessing.

Death of Piero de' Medici.

Louis the XIth, King of France, had granted him and his legitimate descendants the right of adding to their escutcheons

escutcheons three "Fleurs de Lys," and the patent (*c*) is to be found in Commines.

Piero de' Medici left by his consort Lucretia Tornabuoni, who had some literary reputation, and published some poetry, two sons and two daughters. Lorenzo, Giuliano, Bianca, and Giovanna.

Respecting Jacopo, the natural son of Cosmo de' Medici, history is nearly silent. All that we learn is from Vasari, who informs us, he was Provost of Prato, and that near half a century after his death he was commissioned to substitute a marble tomb for the common one of stone, that covered his ashes.

At the death of Piero de' Medici his two sons Lorenzo and Giuliano were not of an age sufficient to qualify them for taking an active part in public measures, and their youth seemed likely to exclude them from the government.

(*c*) Its preamble makes honourable mention of Cosmo de' Medici in the following terms. "Loys, &c. sçavoir faisons, &c. que Nous ayant en mémoire la grande louable et recommandable renommée, que feu Cosme de Médicis a eue en son vivant en tous ses faits et affaires, lesquels il a conduits en si bonne vertu et prudence, que ses enfans et autres ses parens et amis en doivent être recommandés et eslevés en tout honneur; Pour ces causes, et en obtempérant à la suplication et requeste, qui faicte nous a été de la partie de nostre amé et féal Conseiller Pierre de Médicis, fils de dict feu Cosme de Médicis, avons de nostre certaine science, &c. octroyé et octroyons par ces présentes, &c. &c. Donné à Montluçon, au mois de May, l'an de grace 1465, et de notre règne le quatrième."

Memoires de Philip de Commines, tom. 4. 556. 4*to.* 1747.

ment. All eyes were turned towards Tommaso Soderini (*d*), the first person of the party.—The generous old man, rejecting the importunities of his fellow-citizens, presented Lorenzo and Giuliano to them as the children of the state, and they were acknowledged as the heads of the republic. Lorenzo soon discovered many presages of his future greatness, and afforded more than one instance of what might be expected from his riper years. Docile and attentive to the counsels of Soderini, he was obedient by choice from a desire of learning to command, and he suffered only once his passions to get the better of his understanding. The city of Volterra had revolted, and he was determined to reduce it by force of arms, which might have easily been recovered by a gentler method.

Lorenzo and Giuliano declared Chiefs of the Republic.

Every thing succeeded as the friends of the House of Medici could have wished, and it seemed to be more flourishing and more firmly established, than it had ever been, when an unforeseen storm burst impetuously on it, and shook it even to its foundations. The Pazzi, one of the first families of Florence and intimately connected with the Medici, did not still share Lorenzo's friendship; their views were suspected; he conferred no distinction on them; they received no countenance from him; when they

(*d*) Tommaso Soderini was the brother of Niccolò, but they differed in disposition as well as in their political tenets. "Erano Messer Tommaso Soderini, e Niccolò fratelli. Era Niccolò più feroce ed animoso, Messer Tommaso più savio."
Machiavelli, tom. 1. *lib.* 7. 360.

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they complained their remonstrances produced fresh mortifications; and to redress themselves they determined on revenge (*e*).

Conspiracy of the Pazzi.

Every effort in their power was made to strengthen their party, and every means taken to ensure its safety. In Florence the conspiracy was spread as wide as it was possible, and to give it additional stability, it was supported by foreign assistance. Geronino Riario, Lord of Imola and Forli, came forward with the eagerness and impetuosity of a volunteer. This nephew of Sixtus the IVth was inflamed by a deadly hatred against the House of Medici, and he embraced with joy the overtures of Francesco Pazzi the Roman banker, the moment they were made to him. They first suggested in concert the assassination of Lorenzo and Giuliano; Sixtus the IVth and Ferdinand of Naples promised their assistance; nearly all the family of the Pazzi, Francesco Salviati archbishop of Pisa, Montesecco the "Condottiere" of the ecclesiastical troops, Bernardo Bandini, Poggio the son of the celebrated historian, and in the whole near fifty persons joined in the conspiracy.

The

(*e*) Yet Machiavel has stated a personal and private injury, which the Pazzi family supposed themselves to have received. "La maggior cagione che fece che i Pazzi congiurarono contra a'Medici, fu l'eredità di Giovanni Bonromei, la qual fu loro tolta per ordine di quelli." *Machiavelli, tom.* 3. 272.

The Pope took the lead in it, from resentment against Lorenzo, who had supplied Niccolò Vitelli sovereign of the city of Castello with some reinforcements, which enabled him to defend it for some time without being powerful enough to secure it. Ferdinand had no cause whatever of complaint.—A vague and uncertain system of ambition governed his conduct, and he was one of those princes, who endeavour to increase their authority by every opportunity.

The hopes of finding both Lorenzo and Giuliano at their devotions in the cathedral during the celebration of Mass determined the conspirators in their choice of the time and place.—In the tempests of ambition and revenge conscience loses its controuling efficacy, reason and religion sleep.—A violation even of the sanctity of the House of Prayer did not create a single scruple in their irritated minds, and the most awful part of religious worship, the elevation of the Host was to be the profane signal for the most inhuman murther (*f*).—They met at the appointed hour, but Lorenzo was only there, and to make sure of both the victims, two of the party were dispatched in search of Giuliano. He was easily pre-

(*f*) All the historians agree in this circumstance "Cum Eucharistia attolleretur." (*Raff. da Volt. Geog.* 151.) "Cum sacerdos manibus Eucharistiam frangeret." (*Val. in vita*, 24.) "Quandosi communicava il sacerdote," (*Machiavelli, lib.* 8). —I owe this observation to Mr. Roscoe.

prevailed upon to attend them, for though the Medici were not unacquainted with the enmity of the Pazzi family or their wishes to strip them of their consequence, they had not any apprehensions of an attempt upon their lives.—Treason is first suspected by the traitor.—The Medici had no fears.—Behold then the innocent and unsuspicious Giuliano entering the cathedral, conducted arm in arm by his perfidious enemies, who had engaged him in some trifling conversation, and were laughing with a jocularity in such a moment beyond example.—The signal was soon given.—Bandini sprung forward, and stabbed Giuliano, Francesco Pazzi attacked him at the same time with repeated blows, and with such inconsiderate rage as to wound and disable himself.—The guardian angel of Florence watched over Lorenzo.—One of the priests, who had accepted the holy office of assassination, had only given him a slight and ill-directed stroke, having lost his senses from the violence of the emotions, which sometimes attend the commission of great crimes. He had also alarmed Lorenzo by crying out before he attacked him, "Ah Traitor! (*g*)" From this fortunate circumstance Lorenzo warded off the blow, and the wretched ecclesiastic, receiving his dagger in return, fell stretched at his feet. Lorenzo was hurried by his friends

Assassination of Giuliano.

(*g*) "Mess. Antonio da Volterra diputato, come di sopra si disse, ad ammazzar Lorenzo de' Medici, nell'accostarsegli disse: Ah Traditore! la qual voce fu la salute di Lorenzo, e la rovina di quella Congiura." *Machiavelli, tom.* 3. 284.

friends into the Sacristy, they made at first a rampart of their bodies round him, and barricadoed the doors as expeditiously as possible. The consternation and confusion were general, crowds pressed forward without knowing what they did, and the accumulating torrent increased every moment. Bandini, fire flashing in his eye, and rage glowing in his countenance, his dagger still reeking with Giuliano's blood, forced his way through the affrighted multitude in order to repair the error or ill success of his accomplices.—The doors of the Sacristy were furiously assaulted, but in vain.—They were too strong to be forced by his efforts.—He gave up the attempt, cursed—blasphemed—and fled!—In the midst of this dreadful scene the young Cardinal Riario (*a*) (whose uncle Geronimo was one of the principal conspirators, though he did not choose to expose himself in person) half dead with fright, clung to the altar, and the priests had some difficulty in saving his life.—Why the conspirators had brought the young Riario to Florence seems unaccountable, except it was for the purpose of introducing

(*a*) Sixtus the IVth gave him a Cardinal's hat when he was only seventeen years of age. He was afterwards Bishop of Imola, Lantrigues, Osimo, and Cnensa, and Archbishop of Cosenza, Salerno, and Trent, as well as Abbot of Monte Cassino, and Cace. It was said he was so much terrified on this occasion, that he never recovered his natural complection, and continued pale the remainder of his life. He entered, however, along with Cardinal Petrucci into a fresh conspiracy to assassinate Leo the Xth, for which he was imprisoned in the castle of St. Angelo, and on a confession of his crime was generously pardoned.

ducing in his retinue a number of assassins, who might otherwise have been discovered. He passed some days in custody under the most violent apprehensions, and was then generously sent back to the Pope, though it might have been more prudent to have detained him as a security against the future machinations of this atrocious Pontiff.

Salviati, the Archbishop of Pisa, with only a few attendants, had notwithstanding reached the old palace where the magistrates resided, on the supposition that the Medici were already put to death. His agitation and embarrassment occasioned some suspicions; he was interrogated—he hesitated—stammered—and before an explanation had taken place it was no longer necessary. Information of what had been transacted was conveyed to the magistrates. One voice was heard to say, "This "man deserves death, but he is an Ecclesiastic." "That "is of no consequence," replied another, and the treacherous prelate was at the same instant seized.—Foaming with rage, and fastening on his executioners with his teeth, he was hung out of the palace windows. Poggio, and most of the brothers of the Pazzi, met with the same end. Francesco Pazzi, who in repeating his stabs of the unfortunate Giuliano had wounded himself, took refuge in his own house, and throwing himself on his bed, waited the result of the event. He was soon discovered and dragged away by the officers of justice, but

Punishment of the Conspirators.

neither

neither the pain he suffered from his wound, nor the punishment before his eyes, could force a single word from him, or extort a sigh, and he submitted to the fate of his associates with a resolute, a proud, and disdainful silence. His uncle, Jacopo Pazzi, crying out, Liberty! Liberty! ran wildly through the streets, where the magistrates and people saluted him with showers of mud and stones. He escaped afterwards from Florence, and was stopped by the mountaineers at Mugello. When he had exhausted every species of intreaty to save himself, he then prayed and conjured them by his hoary head, which had been whitened with age, to put him to immediate death, but they brought him back in triumph, and he suffered by the hands of the public executioner the ignominious sentence of the rest of his accomplices.—Montesecco had alone the honour of being beheaded, and few of the conspirators escaped.

Bandini, the assassin of Giuliano, concealed himself a little while, and then fled into Turkey, where he was universally detested. Mahomet the IId sent him afterwards, in chains, to Florence, and he was executed the last of the conspirators.

If Montesecco suffered a less infamous sentence than his accomplices, it arose from a kind of delicacy for the Pope, and from his having refused to dip his hands in Lorenzo's blood. The enterprise was even supposed to have

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have miscarried from his refusal. As he could not be prevailed upon, from some remaining scruples of integrity or honour (*b*), to undertake the office, it was intrusted to agents brought up in a seclusion from the world, and to Ecclesiastics, the most improper characters for such a desperate undertaking. Machiavel, who has thought profoundly on the subject of conspiracies, observes (*c*), "That if ever a firm and intrepid resolution, "and a hand inured to bloodshed by frequent exercise "and practice, are necessary, it must be on such occasions "as this, in which it has often proved, that the courage "even of those has failed, that have been brought up "to arms, and accustomed to slaughter (*d*)."

Renato Pazzi.

Renato Pazzi, the youngest of the brothers, was involved in the destruction of the family, but the public pitied him, and wept over his execution. He was a person of letters, and a philosopher, to whom the conspirators had not communicated their intentions, though he had

(*b*) "Ricusò Giovan Batista il volerlo fare, o che la famigliarità aveva tenuta con Lorenzo gli avesse addolcito l'animo, o che pure altra cagione lo movesse. Disse che non gli basterebbe mai l'animo commettere tanto eccesso in Chiesa, e accompagnare il tradimento col sacrilegio." (*Machiavelli, tom.* 1. 400.) What the Soldier refused, the Priest did not scruple to attempt!

(*c*) *Farneworth's Machiavel. vol.* 1. 402.

(*d*) "Perchè se mai in alcuna faccenda si ricerca l'animo grande e fermo, e nella vita e nella morte per molte esperienze risoluto, è necessario averlo in questa, dove si è assai volte veduto agli uomini nell' armi esperti e nel sangue intrisi l'animo mancare." *Machiavelli, tom.* 1. 400.

had discovered them, and spared no pains to prevail on his friends to abandon the design. The only crime he could be reproached with, was his knowledge of the conspiracy without revealing it at the risk of his character. The conspirators would naturally have denied the accusation, and as the charge might have been of difficult proof, Renato Pazzi was liable to have been branded as a calumniator by the public, and to have been ruined in the private opinion of his friends. This innocent and respectable person was therefore punished for his bare knowledge of the crime, and condemned to die for having had eyes and ears (*e*).

Lorenzo

(*e*) "This was exactly the case of the truly respectable Augustin de Thou, counsellor of state, and son of the only good historian of which France can boast; equal to Guicciardini in point of abilities, and perhaps superior in point of impartiality.

This conspiracy was against Cardinal de Richelieu, rather than against Lewis XIII. The design was not to betray France to an enemy; for the King's brother, who was the principal author of the plot, could never intend to betray a kingdom to which he was the presumptive heir, there being only between him and the crown, a dying brother, and two children in the cradle.

De Thou was neither guilty in the sight of God nor man. One of the agents of the King's brother, of the Duke of Bouillon, sovereign Prince of Sedan, and of the grand Equerry d'Effiat St. Mars, had communicated their intention to De Thou, who immediately went to St. Mars, and endeavoured to dissuade him from the enterprise. If he had informed against him, he had no proof, and must inevitably have fallen a sacrifice to the resentment of the presumptive heir, of a sovereign Prince, of the King's favourite, and to public execration. In short, he would have been punished as a malignant calumniator.

The chancellor Seguir was convinced of this in confronting De Thou with the grand Equerry, when De Thou asked the latter the following question: 'Do you not remember, Sir, that there never passed a day in which I did not endeavour to dissuade you from the attempt?' St. Mars acknowledged it to be true. So that

Lorenzo de' Medici was conducted to his own palace amidst an innumerable multitude of people, from whom he received every mark of attachment; they insisted on guards for his future protection, and whilst Giuliano was interred, the streaming eyes of the citizens dropped their affectionate tears upon his bier.

The Pope and Ferdinand of Naples commence hostilities against Florence.

Sixtus and Ferdinand, on the failure of the plot, immediately commenced hostilities, and the Holy Father also launched a spiritual thunderbolt against the Florentines. They were excommunicated, and in their turn they appealed against the interdict to a council, prepared for a vigorous defence, and filled Europe with complaints against the perfidy of their enemies. Some of the greatest powers, the Emperor, the Kings of France and Hungary, interposed ineffectually with their mediation, and the combined army having made its way into Tuscany, its superiority over raw and undisciplined levies was thought to be decisive.—Florence expected to see the enemy at its gates.—Perplexity, terror, and dismay were painted on every face.—A dissolution of the league between the Pope and the King of Naples was the only method

Distress of Florence.

De Thou deserved a recompence, rather than death, from a tribunal of Equity. He certainly deserved to have been saved by Cardinal Richelieu; but humanity was not his virtue. There is in this case something more than 'Summum jus summa injuria.' In the sentence of this worthy man we read, 'for having had knowledge and participation of this said conspiracy.' It does not say, for not having revealed. So that his crime was, his having been informed of a crime; and he was punished for having had ears and eyes." *Comment. on Crimes and Punishments*, c. 9. 52—54.

thod by which the Republic could be saved, and no hopes could be entertained of such a singular piece of good fortune. Lorenzo de' Medici had the resolution to attempt it, and in the perilous moment he did not despair of the safety of the state. Difficulties and impossibilities frequently lie near each other, judgment seizes on the point in contact, and what is possible the hero undertakes. Lorenzo believed the moment to be a crisis when to do no more than our duty is not to do our duty, and where the greatest rashness is the greatest prudence. He calculated the hazard, and decided on the part he had to act.—Satisfied it was impossible to succeed with the see of Rome, he embarked for Naples, and determined, at the risk of his life, to make the experiment of a negotiation with the other Chief of the conspiracy against him. He had communicated his intentions to three or four only of his friends, to whom he had given instructions for the regulation of their conduct; and as soon as he had quitted Florence he forwarded the following Letter to the Magistrates, which might have been dictated by a Curtius or a Regulus.—Fame has consecrated the memories of Eustache de St. Pierre, of Codrus, and of Decius.—Lorenzo has their claim to immortality.

Lorenzo de' Medici embarks for Naples.

(*f*) *Lorenzo de' Medici, to the States of Florence.*

"If I did not explain to you before I left Florence, the cause

(*f*) I have here deserted Mons[r.] Tenhove, and adopted the whole of the trans-

"cause of my departure, it was not from want of respect, "but because I thought, that in the dangerous circum-"stances in which our city is placed, it was more neces-"sary to act than to deliberate. It seems to me that peace "is become indispensable to us; and as all other means "of obtaining it have proved ineffectual, I have rather "chosen to incur some degree of danger myself, than to "suffer the city to continue longer under its present dif-"ficulties; I therefore mean, with your permission, to "proceed directly to Naples, conceiving that as I am the "person chiefly aimed at by our enemies, I may, by de-"livering myself into their hands, perhaps be the means "of restoring peace to my fellow-citizens. Of these two "things one must be taken for granted, either the King "of Naples, as he has often asserted, and as some have "believed, is friendly to the Florentine state, and aims "even by these hostile proceedings rather to render us a "service, than to deprive us of our liberties; or he wishes "to effect the ruin of the Republic. If he be favourably "disposed towards us, there is no better method of put-"ting his intention to the test, than by placing myself "freely in his hands, and this I will venture to say, is the "only mode of obtaining an honourable peace. If, on "the other hand, the views of the King extend to the sub-"version of our liberties, we shall at least be speedily "apprized of his intentions; and this knowledge will be "more

lation by Mr. Roscoe. The former I have found sometimes wandering, on the latter I can rely with confidence.

" more cheaply obtained by the ruin of one, than of all. " I am contented to take upon myself this risque, because " as I am the person principally sought after, I shall be " a better test of the King's intentions; it being possible " that my destruction is all that is aimed at; and again, " as I have had more honour and consideration amongst " you than my merits could claim, and perhaps more " than have in our days been bestowed on any private " citizen, I conceive myself more particularly bound " than any other person to promote the interest of my " country, even with the sacrifice of my life. With this " full intention I now go; and perhaps it may be the will " of God, that as this war was begun in the blood of my " brother, and of myself, it may now by my means be " concluded. All that I desire is that my life, and my " death, my prosperity, and my misfortunes, may con- " tribute towards the welfare of my native place. Should " the result be answerable to my wishes, I shall rejoice in " having obtained peace to my country and security to " myself. Should it prove otherwise, my misfortunes " will be alleviated by the idea that they were requisite " for my country's welfare; for if our adversaries aim " only at my destruction, I shall be in their power, and if " their views extend further, they will then be fully un- " derstood. In the latter case I doubt not that all my " fellow-citizens will unite in defending their liberties to " the last extremity, and I trust with the same success, " as by the favour of God our ancestors have heretofore

 " done.

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"done. These are the sentiments with which I shall pro-"ceed; intreating Heaven that I may be enabled on this "occasion to perform what every citizen ought at all "times to be ready to do for his country. *From San "Miniato, the 7th December* 1749 (*a*)."

When Lorenzo threw himself into the arms of Ferdinand he ran no trifling or imaginary danger. His cruel and unfeeling disposition was notorious; he had armed the conspirators against the Medici, and they that offend are the last to forgive. "Nul n'estoit," in the words of Philip de Comines, "plus dangereux que ce vieux Fer-"rand, et ne se congnoissoit-on en lui ne en son cour-"roux; faisoit mettre gens en merveilleuse et puante pri-"son, ou les faisoit mourir vilainement et horriblement: "bref n'est possible de pis estre; et pourroit sembler aux "lisans que le disse pour haine, mais par ma foy non "fay (*b*)."

Lorenzo's noble temerity was attended by the happiest effects. The Neapolitan tyrant, surprised at such magnanimity of mind, at first did not know how to act, or what

(*a*) Valori informs us that when the letter of Lorenzo was recited in the senate, not one of the assembly could refrain from tears. "Litteræ recitatæ sunt in Senatu, assensu vario, ita tamen, ut nemo a lachrymis temperaret. Movebat omnes tanti viri desiderium, qui pro salute patriæ nullis suis laboribus, aut periculis parceret." *Val. in vita Lor.* 33.

(*b*) *Memoires de Comines, tom.* 1. 463, 464.

what measures to pursue. Yet he was more flattered with this mark of confidence, because he was not often used to meet with any, and Lorenzo had the art of stealing on the heart, and gaining its affections. He succeeded after several interviews with Ferdinand, his enemy became his ally and friend, and a peace was concluded between the two governments. Lorenzo's return to Florence was a triumph (*c*), the citizens lavished on him the favours he so richly deserved, and the public despair was in an instant converted into the most unbounded transports.

Succeeds in his negotiation

Returns with glory, and establishes the Peace of Italy.

The implacable Sixtus accepted with reluctance the excuse

(*c*) "O ego quam cupio reducis contingere dextram
Laurenti, et læto dicere lætus ave!
Maxima sed densum capiunt vix atria vulgus,
Tota salutantum vocibus aula fremit.
Undique purpurei Medicen pia turba Senatûs,
Stat circum, cunctis celsior ipse patet.
Quid faciam? accedam? nequeo, vetat invida turba.
Alloquar? at pavido torpet in ore sonus.
Aspiciam? licet hoc, toto nam vertice supra est.
Non omne officium turba molesta negas.
Aspice sublimi quem vertice fundit honorem,
Sydereo quantum spargit ab ore jubar,
Quæ reducis facies, lætis quam lætus amicis,
Respondet nutu, lumine, voce, manu.
Nil agimus, cupio solitam de more salutem
Dicere, et officium persoluisse meum.
Ite mei versus, Medicique hæc dicite nostro,
Angelus hoc mittit Politianus ave."

excuse of the Florentines, who had executed the archbishop, and they were again restored to the bosom of the church.

At this period the brilliant reputation of Lorenzo, his courage, and his prudence were extolled to the skies, and the great political enterprise, which had been so well conceived and so happily conducted, saved Florence and gave peace to Italy. This peace was not indeed of long continuance, and with the Pope it was meant to be but a perfidious truce. Far from renouncing his ambitious projects, he entered into fresh intrigues, and contracted a close alliance with the Venetians, who had likewise formed views for their own aggrandizement. Other states entered into the league.—Lorenzo's political sagacity realized the chimerical idea of the balance of power, he strengthened himself by a treaty with the states of Naples, Ferrara, and Milan, and the two leagues, acting and re-acting on each other, were a mutual check, which governed Italy. The Duke of Ferrara, attacked by the Venetians, was powerfully supported by his allies. Ferdinando, son of the Duke of Calabria, Louis Sforza the guardian of the Duke of Milan, and Lorenzo de' Medici met at the celebrated Diet of Cremona, and they took such measures as effectually covered their enemies with shame and confusion, who had nothing left but to abandon their intended schemes. The friends of peace had the satisfaction to see it generally established on solid foun-

foundations; Lorenzo was delighted with the accomplishment of his first and dearest wish; he had destroyed ambition, jealousy, and suspicions of every kind against him; and whilst he lived Florence and Italy were like him, calm and happy.

Lorenzo de' Medici having succeeded in his great work of restoring peace to Italy, endeavoured during the rest of his life to consolidate it. Yet this important object did not engross the whole of his thoughts, and in his relaxation from the cares of government, he bestowed his attention on the arts and sciences. He both enlarged Florence, and beautified it with those buildings, which are still the monuments of his magnificence and taste. Both the capital and its frontiers were defended with new fortifications, he encouraged agriculture, and he scattered a number of enchanting villas on the shelving hills, which add so much beauty to the environs and neighbourhood of Florence. From political interests and his own goodness of heart he entered warmly into the public amusements; superb tournaments and many of the ancient spectacles were revived; and the people, passionately fond of these gaudy scenes, were gratified to the utmost of their wishes. A new species of festival was even introduced during the Carnival, which continued a long time in fashion, and consisted of processions, triumphs, and masquerades. Mirth and the Muses added to the festivity, numbers of Lorenzo's little playful

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playful poems were repeated from one person to another, and Italy echoed with gaiety and the name of Medici.—Lorenzo's sonnets have been collected, and a multitude of others written in imitation of them. These festivals in their origin were innocent absurdities, but they soon degenerated and were abused. Many of the Carnival sonnets (*d*), models as they are of the purity of the Florentine dialect, are extremely exceptionable in point of decency, for without modesty beauty is of little value. They celebrated in licentious language, what should always be concealed, and are rather libidinous addresses to the deity of Lamsachus, than warm and passionate hymns to Bacchus or to Venus. Perhaps they deserve a more serious reproach. Love appears in its most prostituted shape, and sometimes it even takes a form, at which

(*d*) " Quest' è Bacco ed Arianna,
Belli e l'un de l'altro ardenti.
Perchè 'l tempo fugge e'nganna,
Sempre insieme stan contenti.
Queste Ninfe e altre genti,
Sono allegre tuttavia.
Chi vuol esser lieto, sia!
Di doman non c'è certezza,
Quant' è bella giovinezza,
Che si fugge tuttavia!

Questi lieti satiretti,
Delle Ninfe inamorati,
Per caverne e per boschetti,
Han lor' posto cento agguati:
Or da Bacco riscaldati,
Ballan, saltan tuttavia.
Chi vuol, &c.

which nature sickens and revolts. Lorenzo, however, is not responsible for these culpable excesses, and he has a claim on us for our admiration, in whatever point of view we contemplate his character. The profoundest and the happiest politician of the age was also the most magnificent patron of the arts and sciences, and what he honoured in others with his protection he cultivated in person. Louis le Gros once said to the Abbé Suger, "Qu'il est fâcheux, mon bon Abbé, qu'on ne puisse à la "fois contempler et agir!" Lorenzo united the extremes, and the arbiter of Italy was the most enlightened Italian. "Think not," says Politiano, writing to his friend,

Patronises the Arts and Sciences.

Queste Ninfe hanno anco caro,
Da loro essere ingannate.
Non puon fare a amor riparo,
Se non genti rozze e'ngrate.
Ora insieme mescolate,
Fanno festa tuttavia,
Chi vuol, &c.

Questa soma che vien dreto,
Sopra l'asino è Sileno.
Cosi vecchio è ebbrio e lieto,
E di carne e d'anni pieno.
Se non puo star ritto, almeno,
Ride e gode tuttavia.
Chi vuol, &c.

Mida vien dopo costoro.
Ciò che tocca oro diventa.
A che giova aver tesoro,
S'altri poi non si contenta?
Che dolcezza vuoi che senta,
Chi ha sete tuttavia?
Chi vuol, &c.

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friend, " (*e*) that any of our learned associates, even they " who have devoted their lives to study, are to be es- " teemed superior to Lorenzo de' Medici, either for " acuteness in disputation or for good sense in forming " a just decision; or that he yields to any of them in ex- " pressing his thoughts with facility, variety, and ele- " gance. The examples of history are as familiar to him " as the attendants that surround his table, and when the " nature of his subject admits of it, his conversation is " abundantly seasoned with salt collected from that " ocean from which Venus herself first sprung (*f*).

With the doctrines and philosophy of Plato and Aristotle he was well acquainted, and Marsilio Ficino, Pico of Mirandula, and Angelo Politiano were his intimate friends and inseparable companions. What men! what society!—Sadi an Arabian poet has said, " The concert " of wisdom is the garden of Paradise."—The history of

Pico Mirandula.

Marsilio Ficino has been already given.—Pico of Mirandula settled at Florence from a love of letters, and a friendship

(*e*) " Cave putes quemquam esse ex nobis, hoc est ex iis qui omnem ætatem in litteris consumpserunt, cui cedat hic, vel acumine in disputando, vel in explicando quæ sentiat, facilitate, copiâ, varietate, gratiâ; acer illi sermo et gravis, et, cum res postulat, salibus scatens, sed ex illo mari collectis in quo Venus est orta. Exempla et historiam veterem sic habet ad manum, ut eis perinde uti semper atque suis stipatoribus videatur." *Epist. lib.* 3. 6.

(*f*) *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, vol.* 2. 117, 118.—I am indebted to Mr. Roscoe for this translation.

friendship for Lorenzo. A Sceptic (*a*) of the last century has spoken of him with contempt, because he affected at the age of fourteen to dispute "de omni Scibili (*b*);" but does it follow from his being when a child ready to answer questions on any subject, that he afterwards wanted understanding?—He enjoyed undoubtedly more reputation than esteem, yet if we reflect on his advantages of birth (for he had some princely blood in his veins), of person which was hardly to be equalled, of youth, for he died at thirty-three, on the most accomplished talents, on his vast learning and philosophical knowledge, and on virtues which did honour to humanity, we shall not be surprised at his cotemporaries unanimously considering him above the common level of mortality (*c*). Far from the character of the pedantic Sophist he despised the public frivolous disputations, in which pride and vain

(*a*) La Mothe de Vayer.

(*b*) Voltaire has expressly fixed the number of questions on which the young Prince of Mirandula offered to enter the Lists with any literary champion. "On trouve a la tête de ses ouvrages quatorze cent conclusions generales sur lesquelles il offrit de disputer. Un peu d'elemens de geometrie, et de la sphere etaient dans cette etude immense la seule chose qui meritait ses peines. Tout le reste ne sert qu'a faire voir l'esprit du tems. C'est la Somme de St. Thomas, c'est le precis des ouvrages d'Albert surnommè le Grand, c'est une melange de Theologie arec le Peripatetisme. On y voit qu'un Ange est infini SECUNDUM QUID: les animaux et le plantes naissent d'une CORRUPTION ANIMEE PAR LA VERTUE PRODUCTIVE. Tout est dans ce gout." *Essai sur le Mœurs, Œuvres de Voltaire, Tom.* 15. 467, 468. *ed. de Geneve.* 8*vo.* 1775.

(*c*) "Indoles planè divina.—*Erasmus in Ciceroniano.*"

vain glory were only interested (*d*), and he often repeated the maxim of St. Francis, that "Science is to be measured by works (*e*)," which however ridiculous it might have been in the stupid Calabrian peasant, fell with dignity from the first scholar of the age. His treatise "de ente et de uno" is no longer read, and the world does not suffer by its slumbers, but the author and the work are not to be confounded. It was calculated for the age and had its use, in ours it has ceased to be of any value. —In the rest of his compositions a little of the ancient rust may be sometimes visible, and if in his contempt of the vulgar errors of the times, he has retained a few of his own prejudices, he was at least the first, who raised his voice against the follies of judicial astrology (*f*). The messenger of reason preached indeed but to a few of the elect in the desert, and scarce a single convert was added to the flock. The lower classes of the people, the

(*d*) "Aiebat eas disputationes prodesse, quæ placido animo ad vestigandam perquirendamque veritatem, privatis in locis, semotisque arbitris exercebantur: at illas obesse plurimum quæ in propatulo fiebant, ad ostentandam doctrinam, vel ad captandam vulgi auram, atque imperitorum applausum. —— Minutulum quantulumcunque devoti, vel seniculi vel aniculæ, affectum in Deum, pluris quam omnem suam humanarum divinarumque rerum notitiam faciebat." *Vita Mirandulæ.*

(*e*) "Tantum scit homo quantum operatur."

(*f*) "Superstitionibus vanis irretitos, eos præsertim qui divinatricem colunt astrologiam acriter taxavit. Demum hydromantiam, geomantiam, pyromantiam, haruspicinam et cætera id genus inania, sigillatim explosit. Sed in profatentes astrologos cuneum ex professo direxit." *Vita Mirandulæ.*

the learned and the most distinguished amongst them (*g*), were then almost equally devoted to it, and to open the trenches against it was supposed to be lost labour and time

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(*g*) Even Filelfo was not wholly free from the general superstition. "Ea profecto natura est siderum, ut res humanas, si non regunt omnino, magnum tamen his momentum afferant." *Convivia Philelphi.*

And Iovianus Pontanus seems a little sore. "Quid indignius, quam tot sæculorum tradita, tot excellentium hominum velle inventa labefacere, et quæ disciplinarum omnium est antiquissima, eam longo post tempore insectari? Videlicet Picus noster (voco eum nostrum, quia magnâ mecum benevolentiâ conjunctus fuit) tractus ipse quidem exemplo est aut Pyrrhonis, qui physicam et moralem omnem doctrinam evertere conatus est olim, aut Laurentii Vallensis, qui nuper decem prædicamentorum seriem, ne dialecticam dicam omnem, ut subrueret, quid non tentavit?"

Iovian. Pontan. l. 3. de Fortunâ.

Yet Lorenzo de' Medici appears to have expressed his contempt of the supposed science:

"Seguon questa infelice in ogni parte
Il sogno, e l' augurio, e la bugia,
E chiromanti, ed ogni fallace arte,
Sorte, indovini, e falsa profezia:
La vocale, e la scritta in sciocche carte,
Che dicon, quando è stato, quel che fia:
L'archimia, e chi di terra il ciel misura,
E fatta a volontà la conjettura."

Which Mr. Roscoe has beautifully rendered:

"Illusive beings round their sov'reign wait,
Deceitful dreams, and auguries, and lies,
Innumerous arts the gaping crowd that cheat,
Predictions wild, and groundless prophecies;
With wond'rous words, or written rolls of fate
Foretelling—when 'tis past—what yet shall rise;
And alchymy, and astrologic skill,
And fond conjecture—always form'd at will."

Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, vol. 1. 269, 270.

time foolishly expended. This ridiculous science continued to hold its empire over the human mind, and only received its first wound in Italy from the famous bull of Pope Sixtus the Vth.

Angelo Politiano.

Many of the great scholars at the restoration of letters have been already mentioned, but Angelo Politiano was of all others their greatest friend. He was the first amongst the Moderns that professed the Greek language, and Erasmus, whose judgment was acknowledged and whose admiration was never violent, has not hesitated to reckon him a literary miracle. We meet with the sweetness and the beauties of the Ancients in most of his works, and the Attic honey appears to have lost very little of its flavour. His fertile genius extended to every subject, and in his Latin translation of Herodian he has excelled, in the opinion of many scholars, the original. —Whilst the History of the Pazzi Conspiracy warms the reader by its interesting relation, he is delighted with the elegance of language; and in the whole composition Politiano will bear a comparison with St. Real, Sarrazin, or Sallust.—Every figure starts out of the canvass, and astonishes us with its uncommon animation.—In his Miscellanies a great depth of critical judgment is every where discernible, with exquisite learning, and his Letters afford a rich fund of instruction and amusement. Of his Latin poetry it is but just to say it has a relish of the Augustan age. In the problems of Alexander of Aphrodisum we

Observations on his Works.

are

are the least concerned, and from the impertinent answers to useless questions (*h*) little improvement is to be derived. Yet this version proves that Politiano had not neglected philosophy. His capacity embraced indeed the whole superficies of ideas, and there was scarcely a literary topic on which he had not exercised it.

The Italian muses, that had been in a deep sleep or lethargy for near a century, were roused from their disgraceful slumbers at his soft and powerful voice. His stanzas, " Della famosa Giostra," resemble Virgil for the brilliancy of expression, and in his vintage Dithyrambics the harmony of numbers and the force of wine are happily united. Those kinds of drama which were called " Favole Boscarreccie," or Pastoral Fables, were supposed to have been invented by him, and his Orfeo is a production of this species, on which Tasso and Guarini have improved.—The stanza of eight rhymes he adopted after the example of the Theseïd of Boccacio; but where Boccacio only made an effort, Politiano succeeded. Too great a conviction of the superiority of his own

(*h*) Amongst many others equally curious, there are the following instructive disquisitions:* " Cur pueri, et senes excrementosi? Cur nonnullis, ubi pudore afficiuntur, sudant alæ? Cur amantes suspirant? Cur, antequam balneum ingrediamur, calidum mingimus; cum diutius in balneo supersedimus, frigidum? Cur brevi staturâ homines, proceris ut plurimum sunt prudentiores? Cur ferarum stercus haud ita malè olet? Cur mingentibus accidit, ut et flatum edant? Cur mejente asello cæteri item mejunt? Cur colaphis icti ignem cernunt? Cur facilior scalarum descensus quam ascensus est? Cur in coïtu oculis connivemus? Cur sæpe inter mejendum horremus? Cur qui se circumagunt decidere solent? Cur sues fimo delectantur? &c, &c."

own talents rendered him petulant, captious, and unpleasant to his learned friends. The weaknesses and foibles, from which men of the brightest talents are not entirely free, reduce them to the standard of their cotemporaries, and the balance of human advantages is by these means preserved. Politiano was lavish in his commendations of ancient Greece, from the Moderns he withheld even justice. His colleague Demetrius Chalcondylas, of some erudition, though without much ingenuity, was one instance of it, who candidly told him "that the ancient "owl was an emblem of wisdom, whilst the modern one "had only its eyes, its plumage, and its beak (*i*)." Politiano had also a long difference with the learned George Merula, patronised by the Sforza family; with Sannazarius, who observes of him, in the style of the times,

> " ——— nescio quis Pulitianus,
> Ni Pulex magis sit vocandus hic (*k*);"

and with Bartolomeo Scala, the Secretary, Gonfalonier, and historian of Florence. The favours which Scala received from Lorenzo shew very clearly that whilst he attended to the balance of power between states and kingdoms, he had the peace to preserve between these literary republicans.

(*i*) "Veteres illæ noctuæ reverâ sapientes erant; nunc multæ noctuæ sunt, quæ noctuarum quidem plumas habent et oculos et rostrum, sapientiam vero non habent."

(*k*) *Epigram. lib.* 1. 66.

publicans. Lorenzo, in fact, as may be gathered from the writers of the times, was their generous mediator, and a great part of his leisure hours was devoted to settle their disputes, and reconcile those fierce spirits to each other. Like a kind and indulgent parent, he had often occasion to interpose his authority, with the

Disputes amongst the learned.

"Ne Pueri, ne tanta animis assuescite Bella!"

though their irritation sometimes made the restoration of peace a work of difficulty.—Politiano's favourite disciple was Piero de Ricci, more known under the Latin name of Petrus Crinitus, who arrived at some literary reputation.

Luigi Pulci.

The two brothers Luigi and Luca Pulci shone likewise in Tuscan poetry. We have from the former the "Morgante Maggiore," an epic poem, having taken its title from the principal personage in it, a Giant converted by the Poet to Christianity, and the companion of the exploits of Roland. The poem is an absurd mass of fables in colours rather natural than splendid; its style is clear, but the author, though an Ecclesiastic, is scandalously licentious. It opens with a profane parody of the first verses of St. John's Gospel, and finishes in the same flagitious manner. Whether the profanation took its rise from folly or impiety it is equally reproachable, and there are other freedoms for which gaiety is too weak a term.—Like the Grecian rhapsodists of old, or the more modern

modern Troubadours, Pulci sung his verses at Lorenzo's table, surrounded with his friends. In Italy it has not been yet determined if the "Morgante Maggiore" is of a serious or a comic turn, which is hardly to be credited. There may be indeed some equivocations, and a few passages that may admit of different constructions, but if it was to be read even in the cave of Trophonius, by a sepulchral lamp, an involuntary laugh would frequently escape.

Luca Pulci.

Luca Pulci, the brother, was the author of the "Vaghissima Giostra di Lorenzo il Magnifico," and of the Poem "Ciriffo Calvaneo," to which, in the following century, Bernardo Giambullari added a paltry conclusion. The two brothers had a sister likewise who distinguished herself in the same career, and one of their cotemporaries applied to them the

"Carminibus patriis nobilissima Pulcia proles."

Italian Poetry.

To appreciate exactly the merit of the Italian poetry of Politiano, the Pulci, and Lorenzo de' Medici, the strange revolution by which the language had fallen into contempt should be particularly examined. In the rage or fervour for the dead languages of Greece and Rome, Italian genius had abandoned its native tongue to the lowest orders of society, and could not descend from an interview with Cicero and Socrates to the idiom of the populace.

populace. They, who did not disdain occasionally to make use of it, mixed with it so many extraordinary terms, and introduced such a singular orthography, for the purpose of preserving an analogy with the Latin, that it lost the noble and elegant simplicity in which the great men of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had left it. Men with only half their knowledge and pretensions, who had the slightest smattering of the Greek and Latin tongues, spoke with contempt of the celebrated triumvirate Dante Petrarch and Boccacio, and held them in the same estimation with those light and frivolous writers that serve to amuse the public for a moment with their works, and are then forgotten. After having grown pale over Ovid's Art of Love, or travelled through an Ode of Anacreon, they took up the Inferno of Dante, or Petrarch's Sonnets, as a relaxation; and these immortal productions, which, notwithstanding their defects, will for ever retain an honourable place in the libraries of nations, were to these little pedants like the Tales of the Fairies, or Travesty of Virgil. It was some consolation that a fashion of this kind could not reign for any considerable length of time, in a country where Nature produces from time to time those luminous stars of genius, which penetrate through the mists that ignorance, false taste, and superstition are continually creating.

Andronicus of Thessalonica.

Andronicus of Thessalonica, superior to all the Greeks of

Marullus.

of the fifteenth century, except Chrysoloras and Gaza (*a*), enjoyed likewise a share of Lorenzo's favour, and settled at Florence. Michael Tarchionatus Marullus, the Latin Poet, a Lacedemonian by birth, renounced, from the same motives, his military profession, and was attracted by the same seductive influence (*b*). His Lamentations on the Ruin of his Country (*c*) are not without elegance; but, in the opinion of Erasmus, they are tinctured with too much Paganism (*d*). He had married the illustrious

(*a*) "Laurentius Florentiam accivit Andronicum Thessalonicensem, qui ibi docuit Græcas litteras, quarum tantâ polluit peritiâ, ut proximus fuisse a Gazâ hac laude, immo aliorum judicio superasse eum dicatur a Vossio de Historicis Lotinis."
Bandini, Specim. Litt. Flor.

(*b*) "———— et gradum
Placuit ad urbem flectere,
Qua noster Medices, Pieridum parens,
Marulle, hospitium tibi dulce exhibet,
Ac te perpetuis muneribus fovens
Phæbum non patitur tela resumere,
Laurens, Camœnarum decus."
Petr. Crinitus.

(*c*) "Sed neque fas neque jura Deos mortalia tangunt,
Et rapit arbitrio fors fera cuncta suo.
Nam quid prisca fides juvit pietasque Pelasgos?
Ecce jacent, nullo damna levante Deo.
Aspice Byzanti quondam gratissima Divis
Mœnia, Romanæ nobile gentis opus.
Hæc quoque jam tandem hostili data præda furori est,
Solaque de tantâ gloria gente manet."

(*d*) "Marulli pauca legi, tolerabilia, si minus haberent paganitatis." *Erasm.*

trious Alessandra Scala, greatly admired by Politiano, who often celebrated the Queen of

> "——— Brunettes,
> Aux beaux yeux noirs, et qui dans leurs goguettes,
> Disoient, Dieu sçait, gentillesses en Grec (e)."

Politiano's beautiful little Poem of the Violets (f) was also intended for her.

It

(e) *Œuvres de Fontenelle, tom.* 2. 289. *4to. La Haye*, 1728.

(f) "Molles ô violæ, Veneris munuscula nostræ,
Dulce quibus tanti pignus amoris inest,
Quæ vos quæ genuit tellus, quo nectare odoras
Sparserunt Zephyri, mollis et aura comas?
Vosne in Acidaliis aluit Venus aurea campis?
Vosne sub Idalio pavit Amor nemore?
Felices nimium violæ, quas carpserit illa
Dextera quæ miserum me mihi subripuit;
Quas roseis digitis formoso admoverit ori
Illi, unde in me spicula torquet Amor.
Forsitan et vobis hæc illinc gratia venit,
Tantus honor dominæ spirat ab ore meæ.
Aspice lacteolo blanditur ut illa colore,
Aspice purpureis ut rubet hæc foliis.
Hic color est dominæ, roseo cum dulce pudore
Pingit lacteolas purpura grata genas.
Quem dulcem labris, quem latè spirat odorem,
En violæ in vobis ille remansit odor.
O fortunati flores, mea vita meumque
Delicium, ô animi portus et aura mei!
A vobis saltem violæ grata oscula carpam,
Vos avidâ tangam terque quaterque manu,
Vos lacrymis satiabo meis, quæ mœsta per ora,

CHAP. V.

Borchiello.

It was at Florence that the burlesque Italian Poetry first appeared. Domenico di Giovanni, surnamed Borchiello, wrote towards the end of the fifteenth century, and excelled so much in this kind of poetry, that it has since been called in Italy, Burlesche, or Burchiellesche. Yet his wit is often coarse, for the most difficult character is that of a wit by profession.

Donato Acciajuoli.

Donato Acciajuoli, of one of the most ancient Florentine families, was also distinguished by his learning and his intimacy with the Medici. He left a Life of Charlemagne, and those of Scipio and Hannibal in Latin, which he dedicated to the Medici. The latter have been introduced into most of the Latin editions of Plutarch before the year 1624, and weakly supposed by Campanus and some others, to be translations of a part of Plutarch, that has perished.—Donato Acciajuoli died, in the service of Lorenzo and the Republic, Ambassador to Louis the XIth of France.

Amongst

Perque sinum vivi fluminis instar eunt.
Combibite has lacrymas, quæ lentæ pabula flammæ,
Sævus Amor nostris exprimit ex oculis.
Vivite perpetuum violæ, &c. &c."

La Cecca, a learned and beautiful young Lady of Sienna, inspired also Politiano's muse, and he addressed to her the following distich:

"Mnemosyne audito Senensis carmine Ceccæ,
Quando, inquit, decima est nata Puella mihi?"

The FOURTH GRACE, the EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD, and the TENTH MUSE, were the compliments in fashion.

Christoforo Landino.

Amongst the writers in the age of the Medici, Christoforo Landino, the useful but prolix commentator on Dante, ought not to be forgotten or omitted. Dante's immortal work is undoubtedly obscure, and will never be perfectly understood (*g*) by many of its readers, notwithstanding Landino has explained many of its difficulties, and thrown great light on the dark passages. His Commentary was dedicated to the State, and his labours were rewarded with a villa (*h*). A villa for notes.—It was the hour of enthusiasm!—On the new Commentary, Dante, who had been dead near two centuries, was recalled from his exile by a singular and formal process of the Senate; his forfeited goods were restored to his descendants; he was declared, with his posterity, capable of receiving all honours and offices (*i*), and his bust was crowned

(*g*) "Laudat Aligherium et fumantes sulfure fossas
Maxima pars hominum. Quotus est tamen aurea vatis
Qui sensa, et senium Musæ, et mirabile textum
Et caligantes sacrâ rubigine gemmas
Tangat acu? Pauci queis clarâ lampade pectus
Incendit, rerumque arcana recludit Apollo."
Luc. Sectani Satyræ.

(*h*) "Messer Cristofano Landini comenta la grande e oscura opera di Dante Alighieri, e la dedica alla Rep. Fior. l'anno 1481, che in premio gli donò il palazzo nel borgo alla collitia in Casentino, sulle mura Castellane."
Chronica Ms. del tempo.

(*i*) "Firenze quasi dugent' anni dopo il suo esiglio, con un publico decreto del Senato richiamandolo, lo restituì al suo seno, l'abilitò a tutte le cariche, e a tutti i privilegii, &c." *Padre Negri, Cat. Scritt. Fior. Dante.*

crowned with laurel. The fanaticism of Marsilio Ficino was even more absurd, and the Platonic philosopher appeared under a temporary and joyous derangement of his understanding. "Father Apollo," he exclaims, "has "at last, my Dante, listened to my lamentations, and "commiserated thy exile. Mercury has been directed "by him to assume the form of the pious Christoforo "Landino, to awaken thee gently with his wand, and "convey thee on his wings to Florence. Whilst thou art "crowned with laurel, the gates of Heaven open at the "sound, the empyreal blaze of glory for the first time "illuminates the world. From whence proceeds the ravishing harmony that captivates our ears? Poets and "the Muses, whose celestial voices have never been "before heard, are now joining in congratulations, Dominions in the globe of Phœbus are now partaking of "the concert, Archangels from the globe of Mercury are "answering them in hymns, and singing, Glory to Apollo, "Glory to the Muses, Glory to the Graces, and peace, "and happiness, and joy to Florence (*k*)!"

The

(*k*) "Mi Danthes, nuper tuus pater Apollo, et longum fletum meum, et diuturnum exilium tuum miseratus, mandavit Mercurio, ut piæ Christophori Landini vatis menti prorsus illaberetur, Landineosque vultus indutus, almâ primum virgâ dormientem te suscitaret, deinde alarum remigio te sublatum mœnibus Florentinis inferret, denique Phœbeâ tibi lauro tempora redimiret. ——— Ecce, dum noster coronatur Danthes, panditur domus omnipotentis Olympi, empyrei cœli flammæ nullis amplius visæ, hodiè manifestè nobis coruscant, coronato Danthi gratulabundæ. Proinde quemnam putatis esse tantum hunc, tam novum, tam dulcem sonum, aures nunc vestras implentem? Profecto sonus prophetarum musarumque novem, nullis alias auditus sæculis, hodiè palam coronationi Danthis applaudit. Eia audite dulces Do-

The ancient democratic form of government, and the storms of liberty, had furnished the citizens of Florence of every description with frequent opportunities of speaking in public, and they had cultivated eloquence in order to influence their fellow-citizens. Many of the old Florentine Chronicles have preserved fragments of their authentic harangues; but this ardent and powerful species of eloquence ceased to be an object of popular regard, when Florence ceased to be free (*l*). Another kind of eloquence, which appears of easy acquisition to the ignorant, but has its difficulty as it requires a noble simplicity, Ecclesiastical eloquence, glittered under Lorenzo de' Medici.

Savonarola.

Geronimo Savonarola, the famous Dominican, factious, insolent, inflexible, impetuous, and sanguinary, and also an enthusiast, was notwithstanding honoured with Lorenzo's protection. Neither Lorenzo's favours nor friendship had, however, any effect on this turbulent monk, he

minationum cantus a Phœbi globo: audite rursum miros Archangelorum hymnos, ab ipso Mercurii globo canentium; Gloria in excelsis Apollini summo, gloria Musis, gloria Gratiis, pax, fecilitas, lætitia Florentinis, reduce jam sole gaudentibus."

(*l*) With the loss of liberty a nation loses every thing that can affect the mind with any powerful emotions, and rouse the heart with emulation or the love of glory. Even in Athens, where Æschines had lightened, and Demosthenes had thundered, the people, after the ruin of their freedom, sunk almost into a comparative state of barbarism. "Viguit Athenis," as my learned friend Rhunkenius has observed in one of his dissertations, "Eloquentia circiter 150 annos, et fractâ populi Libertate, ipsa quoque concidit, Libertatis socia et alumna."

he continued his furious declamations against every kind of public gaiety that Lorenzo wished to encourage, and preached up anarchy under the specious name of Liberty. Finding it impossible to attach him to his interest or person, after various attempts to soften him, Lorenzo sent one of the principal citizens to caution him, by his authority, against touching on such delicate subjects (*m*) in his sermons. Lorenzo's friend found Savonarola at the convent of St. Mark, where he resided, and he is supposed to have opened his commission in the following terms.

"Give me leave, good Father, to complain of you to "yourself, and to request you will be the judge of your "own conduct. I allow that common and useful truths "ought not to be preached in a cold languid style, and "that you have reason to believe, if delivered in that "manner, they would lose their effect, and fatigue the "senses. Your astonishing success is, however, in some "measure owing to the simplicity of your congregations, "and not wholly to the elegance of your discourses, "though I admit their merit.—I have not the insolence of "pretending to instruct you, I wish only to speak to you "with

(*m*) "Eum ut sibi conciliaret multis tentavit; quod ubi frustra cecidisse comprehendisset, magnæ authoritatis civem ad eum destinavit, monitum, uti ex sese Hieronymo suaderet, ex re esse et religionis et reipublicæ Florentinæ, ut aliorum more concionaretur, hoc est, in universum et a futuri rebus prænunciandis abstineret, nec aggrederetur particulatim res non admodum necessarias. Hunc virum, &c."
Vita Savonarolæ.

"with freedom, and I flatter myself truth from a friend "may be listened to with patience.—If I were even to be "the object of your curses, I should still speak to you "without disguise.—Give up your confidence in fraud "and stupidity, for the absurd rigorous system you are "inculcating is inconsistent with a city like Florence, and "cease your endeavours to persuade the poor illiterate "people, that rudeness is virtue and melancholy merito- "rious.—Your temper is sour and harsh, it cuts you off "from gay society, and you are dull and gloomy.—There "is malignity, to say no worse, in wishing to reduce Flo- "rence to your own melancholy, and to disturb those "amusements that you have renounced, and for which "you have no taste.—Avoid in future I beseech you "every violence and all bitter personalities, and do not "offend the gaiety of the heart of that most illustrious "person, who with great power is goodness itself. "Leave politics to themselves.—An Ecclesiastic ought "to have nobler views and sublimer occupations.—Even "Christianity itself cannot approve of your conduct.— "Direct our prayers—preside over our religion—exhort "your fellow-citizens to every virtue, and you will be "one of the most useful members of society.—Your pro- "fession (I do not speak of the Monk, but of the Priest), "is without contradiction the most necessary and most "respectable of all others, when it is itself respected, "and its duties properly administered.—A foolish priest "inspires contempt, a libertine horror; but the good shepherd,

"shepherd, pious, without superstition, learned, eloquent, humane, and tolerant, without pretending to be a prophet, or ambitious, or intriguing, is universally esteemed, and deserves almost adoration.—Endeavour to be in future this good shepherd, and do not conceal under the mantle of Jesus Christ the most dangerous projects, or snatch a firebrand from the altar for the destruction of the state.—You appear, Father, to be mortified, and I know your wish of governing. But I conjure you by all the saints and by the sacred name of Dominic, the founder of your Order, to controul in future your superior genius, to lay a restraint on the victorious eloquence with which Heaven has blessed you, and to give up the desire of seducing your fellow-citizens by such insinuating means.—Sacrifice even your enchanting tongue, rather than suffer it to become the source of public calamities, and the ruin of your country's peace.—Commune with yourself, and when your passions and the lust of domineering inflame you, reflect a moment on yourself.—Turn your eyes upon your habit, and your sandals."

It is unfortunately too well known, this harangue made no impression on the fiery temper of Savonarola, who with a severe reprimand to his visiter, rudely turned his back upon him, and vowed that mortal hatred against him, which may always be expected from the hypocrite, by those he cannot dupe, and with whose sentiments

ments of him he is acquainted.—We have volumes of Savonarola's sermons, and his blind and bigotted followers have supposed them to have been taken as he preached, and written miraculously (*a*) with the same rapidity, that he delivered them. Homer, speaking of the eloquence of Ulysses, has beautifully described it by the

"(*b*) —— επεα, νιφαδεσσιν εοικοτα χειμεριησιν (*c*),

but Savonarola's was very different. Instead of "the "softness of descending snow," he tells the Florentines he is the destructive hail, and recommends them to get under shelter from the storm (*d*). The revelations afforded

(*a*) "Extant sermonum eorum quos habebat ad populum nonnulla volumina, quæ formis excusa sunt, et in publicam data utilitatem; et de suggestu pronunciantis ab ore notarii velocissimi calamo et operâ excepta sunt, et pro miraculo est habitum potuisse quemquam scribentem manu, viri linguam tam velociter et fervidè disserentis, immo fulminantis, assequi." *Vita Savonarolæ.*

(*b*) *Homer. Iliad. lib.* 3. 222.

(*c*) "—— what elocution flows,
Soft as the fleeces of descending snows!
The copious accents fall with easy art;
Melting they fall and sink into the heart!"
Pope's Homer's Iliad, book 3. 283—286.

(*d*) "Similem me esse grandinis non nego, quæ incautos sub dioque deprehensos verberat; itaque moneo, ut si quis effugere vim meam, castigationemque velit, sub tecta sese recipiat, ne, si aliter fieret, non grandinis fuisse culpa, sed ejus, qui se depluenti grandini objecerit, videatur." *Erasm. de Ratione Concionandi.*

forded him an eternal subject for his texts (*e*), on every holyday he explained some of their sublime mysteries, and his own punishment was the only event he could not read in the volume of futurity.

Mariano Quinazano.

Lorenzo de' Medici built a cloister at Florence for the use of Mariano Quinazano, Savonarola's rival, of whom Politiano has written so warm an elogium: "I "was lately induced," says he, "to attend one of his lec-"tures, rather, to say the truth, through curiosity, than "with the hope of being entertained. His appearance "however interested me in his favour. His address was "striking, and his eye marked intelligence. My expec-"tations were raised. He began—I was attentive; a "clear voice—select expression—elevated sentiment. "He divides his subject—I perceive his distinctions. "Nothing perplexed; nothing insipid; nothing languid. "He unfolds the web of his argument—I am enthralled. "He refutes the sophism—I am freed. He introduces a "pertinent narrative—I am interested. He modulates "his voice—I am charmed. He is jocular—I smile. He "presses me with serious truths—I yield to their force. "He addresses the passions—the tears glide down my "cheeks. He raises his voice in anger—I tremble, and "wish myself away (*f*)."

As

(*e*) "Apocalypsim e suggestu Florentinæ plebi interpretari aggressus est." *Vita Sav.*

(*f*) *Politiani Epist. lib.* 4. *Epist.* 6.—The translation belongs to Mr. Roscoe.

As Lorenzo could not draw all the scholars of the age to Florence, his encouragement was extended to the learned at a distance, and his favours reached them wherever they resided. He was intimately connected with Ermolao Barbaro, the Patriarch of Aquileia, and the critical philosopher to whom Pliny is so much indebted, and with Iovianus Pontanus, one of the greatest ornaments of the court of Naples. To these learned men Platina may be added, the author of the Lives of the Popes, who received many obligations from him, and the Brother Jocundus of Verona, an universal genius, who entered deeply into the study of antiquities during his stay at Rome, and dedicated a treatise on the subject to Lorenzo.

Platonic Academy.

The long projected design of a Platonic academy, which first suggested itself to Cosmo de' Medici, was now realized. Lorenzo strongly recommended it to his friends, and Marsilio Ficino, Pico of Mirandula, Landino, and Valori, were the principal directors of the establishment. They assembled in Lorenzo's palace, and oftener at his delicious country residence of Careggi, which recalled to these new academicians what they had read of the celebrated Garden where Plato reasoned with his Disciples, where the Chapel of the Muses was to be seen with the Altar of Love, and the Statues of the Graces shaded by those venerable planes, which Sylla afterwards

 afterwards sacrilegiously converted into military instruments for the siege of Athens.

Both opulence and frugality presided at their repasts; the sages, animated with their cups, enlightened each other; and the sweet nectar of Serravalla and Montepulciano exhilarated their spirits.—After a convivial entertainment, they retired from the festive board to give lectures upon Plato, and each guest took up at hazard the passage he was to explain. The fifth of November, the day on which Plato was born and died, and which had been religiously observed to the time of Porphyry and Plotinus, was set apart by his new followers for an annual commemoration, and they solemnly attended it.—Some writers have pretended these philosophical banquets did not present a favourable aspect, and they have criticised them with some acrimony, perhaps severity. Yet, after the remarks on the Orphic reveries of Marsilio Ficino, it must be admitted these able scholars were often guilty of many indiscretions; and when they imagined they were offering up their incense on the altar of reason, they were sacrificing to an opposite faculty of the soul, in Father Malebranche's words, to "La Folle du Logis." Sometimes they discovered a large portion of fanaticism, and though philosophers, were not free from superstition. Their opinions were meant to be concealed under the guise of obscure allegories, and they delivered their tenets in

in Pindaric language.—Signs, prodigies, apparitions, dreams, portents, and presentiments, were articles of their faith.—In many passages of the ancient authors they discovered hidden treasures, and what those authors certainly never intended to express; and in their dissertations on "The Soul of the World," there is a mixture of mystery and folly. Christianity, in short, was reduced to a species of divine philosophy, which had a heathenish appearance, and was very inconsistent with the prevailing ideas (*g*) of the Orthodox believer. To an impartial observer,

(*g*) "Quasnam hi Academici hypotheses foverent, referre prolixum esset. Hoc pronunciare liberè possum, eorum opiniones tenebricosis allegoriarum involucris, et dicendi genere plus quam poëtico, qui omnium fermè academicorum mos erat, fuisse absconditas, eoque id factum consilio, ut enthusiasmo Alexandrino mirificè servirent, et recentiorum Platonicorum somniis fidem certissimam facerent. Hanc ineptientis ingenii labem, et credulitatem philosopho indignam, detestabili superstitione demonstrabant, quâ horamatis, somniis, ominibus, mirum quantum tribuerent: maximas præterea rerum civilium vices, nescio quibus imaginationis terriculamentis significari, vel siderum positionibus et apparitionibus fuisse præmonstratas, indignâ viro docto ratione, plerique contendebant. Quis enim sanæ mentis Philosophus dicet, ut legitur in præfatione ad Plotinum, Laurentii Medicis animam exspirantem lætum ætherem excepisse, grandiore stella in Laurentiana tecta cadente, mirisque flammis ex alto in Carreggianis agris coruscantibus? et biduo ante obitum, Jovem rubente dexterâ sacras jaculatum arces, terruisse urbem, mox orbam tanto patre futuram? Quin et abdita mysteria in veterum Scriptorum explanationibus investigare penitus solebant, adeo ut nonnunquam eorum ingenium, uberiori fantasia abreptum, ita luxurietur, ut jure merito in fanaticorum classem referri mererentur. Mundum esse animatum cum Platonicis Alexandrinis credidere; esse quasdam veluti escas, quibus animati mundi et stellarum munera adlicere queant mortales, sibique vindicare; inter mundi animam et corpus inesse spiritum, eumque necessario requiri, tanquam medium, quo anima divina, et insit corpori crassiori, et vitam eidem penitus largiatur; hunc mundi spiritum, sibi faventem reddendum ab eo esse, qui sanus esse cupiat. Alia præterimus, lectoremque ad librum Ficini de vitâ cœlitus conservandâ remittimus, in quo Auctor magno studio, ejusmodi ineptias inseruit. Tantum ita-

observer, the purity of their intentions and the enthusiasm of novelty may serve as an excuse for their proceedings, and without either condemning them, or insulting their nakedness, a veil may be thrown over their failings, and the philosophical eye may turn from them with a decent respect.

Few persons are ignorant of the moving spheres in globes of glass, by which Archimedes (*h*), and afterwards Posidonius, the friend of Cicero, succeeded in their imitation of the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, or the apparent courses of the sun, and the constant wanderings of the planets. To produce a model of the universe, and to vivify that model was the last effort of human industry, and there is not a single invention that has done more honour to genius of any kind. The great native of Syracuse,

que addam, Platonis placita ita fuisse sectatos, ut Christiano ac prudenti viro sancitos fines audacter excederent." *Bandini, Spec. Litt. Flor.*

(*h*) "Jupiter in parvo cum cerneret æthera vitro,
Risit, et ad Superos talia dicta dedit;
Huccine mortalis progressa potentia curæ?
Jam meus in fragili luditur orbe labor.
Jura poli, rerumque fidem, legesque Deorum,
Ecce Syracusius transtulit arte senex.
Inclusus variis famulatur spiritus astris,
Et vivum certis motibus urget opus.
Percurrit proprium mentitus signifer annum,
Et simulata novo Cynthia mense redit.
Jamque suum volvens audax industria mundum,
Gaudet et humanâ sydera mente regit."
Claudianus in Sphæram Archim. Epigramm. 18. 694. 4to. *Amst.* 1760.

racuse, in raptures with theory alone, was transported with his Sphere, and has left us a description of it, notwithstanding his indifference to his other machines. China perhaps never produced its equal, though it prides itself on immemorial antiquity. Towards the end of the year 1480, Lorenzo di Volpaja, or Golpaja, a Florentine, and the scholar of Toscanelli, re-produced this miracle, and it may be seen in the writings of the times with what a degree of astonishment it was received.

Lorenzo di Volpaja.

Under the auspices of Lorenzo de' Medici, the university of Pisa was established, and the study of the civil law soon flourished in a very extraordinary manner. Near the middle of the twelfth century, the collection of Justinian's Institutes, which had been buried near five hundred years, appeared again in the West. The Pisans having sacked and plundered the Neapolitan city of Amalphi, found, in the pillage, the venerable manuscript of the Pandects, so famous in our days under the name of the Florentine Pandects (*a*). A respect for the grandeur of ancient Rome, and a disgust arising from the contrast

Civil Law.

(*a*) "They are comprised in two quarto volumes, with large margins, and are written on a thin parchment, and the Latin characters betray the hand of a Greek Scribe. They are deposited in the ancient palace of the Republic," Mr. Gibbons adds, "new bound in purple, and in a rich casket, and are shewn to curious travellers, by the Monks and Magistrates, bareheaded, and with lighted tapers." *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol.* 4. 364, 365. 4*to*. 1788.

CHAP. V. trast of the Roman and Gothic laws, joined to the wisdom and depth of knowledge in the Justinian Code, insured its immediate adoption in Italy. By degrees, the same considerations introduced it into other states (*b*), and the Civilian in his zeal forgot, or did not sufficiently reflect, that the legal system of a great and triumphant empire was not applicable to poor or oppressed nations, who were still in chains. The first eligible step towards the introduction of a new code of jurisprudence ought to be a minute study of it, and a deep penetration into the wisdom of its intentions, which are sometimes enigmatical.—Long before the establishment of the University at Pisa, Tuscany had to boast of very able Professors. Accursus, the restorer of the science, Cino of Pistoia, and Bartolo of Pisa, were Tuscans, and their memories will ever do their country honour. Tuscany also flatters herself with having given birth to the first compiler of canon law. His Concordance, with the title of the Decretal of Gratian, swarms however with errors, with suppositions, and falsities. In the fourteenth century Giovanni Andre, born at Mugello near Florence, was distinguished by various names as the first canonist of

(*b*) Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, and Scotland, received them as common law or reason. In France and Italy they had a direct influence; and they were respected in England from Stephen to Edward the Ist, our national Justinian." (*Duck. de Usu et auctoritate Juris Civilis, l.* 2. *c.* 18. 15. *Heineccii Hist. Juris Germanici. c.* 3, 4. *No.* 55. 124.) I owe the whole of this observation to the Historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

of his time, but his Commentaries (*c*) on the Decretals have not reached us.

Lorenzo de' Medici, to repair as far as he was able the great loss which literature had sustained by the accidental destruction of the Palatine library of the Cæsars (*d*), the miserable piety of Gregory the Great (*e*), and the fanatical madness of the Sultan Osman (*f*), collected, at a great expence,

(*c*) When the Professor could not deliver his lectures in person, they were given by a beautiful and amiable proxy, and in the words of Christina of Pisa, "Quand il estoit occupè de quelque essoine, il envoyoit Novelle sa fille en son lieu lire aux escholes en charge, et afin que la beautè d'icelle n'empeschât la pensée des oyans, elle avoit une petite COURTINE devant elle.—The CURTAIN was a necessary precaution.

(*d*) It was destroyed by lightning.

(*e*) Doctor sanctissimus ille Gregorius, qui melleo prædicationis imbre totam rigavit et inebriavit Ecclesiam —— incendio dedit probatæ lectionis scripta, Palatinus quæcunque tenebat Apollo." *Joannes Sarisberiensis.*

"Fertur beatus Gregorius bibliothecam combussisse gentilem, quo divinæ paginæ gratior esset locus, et major authoritas, et diligentia studiosior." *Idem.*

(*f*) John the Grammarian, the last disciple of Ammonius, and surnamed Philoponus, from his laborious researches into grammar and philosophy, lived "Donec caperet Amrus Ebno'l As Alexandriam, et ad Amrum, accessit; qui, cognito quem in scientiis locum teneret, honore ipsum affecit, audiitque de sermonibus ejus Philosophicis, quibus assueti non fuerant Arabes, quod eum ad stuporem redigeret, quoque percelleretur; fuit autem Amrus intellectu præditus, ad res percipiendas promptus, conceptibus claris, adhæsit ergo illi, neque ab eo discessit. Deinde die quodam dixit illi Johannes, Circumivisti tu omnia Alexandriæ repositoria, omniaque rerum genera quæ in iis reperiuntur obsignâsti; quod ad illa igitur, quæ tibi profutura sint, nolo tibi contradicere, at quæ nulli tibi usui futura sunt, nobis potius convenient. Dixit illi Amrus, quid est quo opus tibi sit; dixit illi; Libri Philosophici, qui in

pence, the library which has been known under his name. John Lascaris, a descendant of the Imperial family of Constantinople, was sent with a commission into Greece, and he returned from the Levant after having reaped, by the assistance of the Sultan Bajazet, a rich harvest of Greek and Oriental manuscripts.—Guarino, his associate, was less fortunate, for the vessel with his literary treasures perished in port, and he was so much affected with the loss, that his hair became grey in a single night.

Laurentian library.

The foundation of the Laurentian library was an object that Lorenzo had always anxiously at heart, and his solicitude respecting it was not weakened even in his last moments. When life was ebbing fast away, he called Politiano to his bed-side, and squeezing him by the hand he told him, he could have wished to have lived to see his

Gazophylaciis [Bibliothecis] Regiis reperiuntur. Hoc, inquit Amrus, est de quo statuere non possum, illud [petis] de quo ego quid in mandatis dare non possum, nisi post veniam ab Imperatore fidelium Omaro Ebno'lchattab impetratam. Scriptis ergo ad Omarum literis, notum ei fecit, quid dixisset Johannes, perlatæque sunt ad ipsum ab Omaro literæ, in quibus scripsit. Quod ad libros quorum mentionem fecisti: si in illis contineatur, quod cum libro Dei conveniat, in libro Dei [est] quod sufficiat absque illo; quòd si in illis fuerit quod libro Dei repugnet, neutiquam est eo [nobis] opus, jube igitur è medio tolli. Jussit ergo Amrus Ebno'l As dispergi eos per balnea Alexandriæ, atque illis calefaciendis comburi: ita spatio semestri consumpti sunt. Audi quid factum fuerit et mirare." (*Gregorii Abul-Pharajii Hist. Dynast. ex Versione Pocock.* 114.) Mr. Gibbons disbelieves the supposed fact, and he is fortified in his incredulity by the silence of Rutychius and Elmacin, and the rational scepticism of Renaudot. "Historia," says the last author, "... habet aliquid απιστον ut Arabibus familiare est." *Hist. Alex. Patriarch, p.* 170.

his library complete (*g*).—It is matter of serious regret that such an immense and precious collection should not have been kept together.—The books and manuscripts which were taken away when Charles the VIIIth invaded Italy were either lost or separated, and could never be recovered. Some indeed are still preserved in the Benedictine library at Venice, but they are few in number, and those which the mother of Charles the IXth carried with her into France, and the President De Thou purchased of her creditors, were in the late French King's library.

(*g*) "Vellem ait distulisset me saltem mors hæc ad eum diem quo vestram plane bibliothecam absoluissem." *Polit. Epist. lib.* 4. *epist.* 2.

CHAP. VI.

PROGRESS *of Architecture--Crona--Cecca—Baccio Pintelli—L. Batista Alberti—Painting--Filippo Lippi—-Andrea del Castagno—-Pesello Peselli—Sandro Boticelli—-Antonio Pollajuoli—-Domenico Ghirlandi—-Luca Signorelli—-Oderino di Gubio---Francesco di Bologna—Invention of Prints--Maso Finiguerra—Baccio Baldini—Medals--Vettore Pisano—Giovanni di Cornalino—Sculpture--Didiero di Settigano--Mino di Fesola—Bernetto di Majano—Andrea Verocchio—Bertoldo—Michelagnolo—Character of Lorenzo de' Medici—His last illness—His death—Giuliano de' Medici—Gulielmo de' Pazzi—Giacopo de' Pazzi—Camisio de' Pazzi—Gulielmo de' Pazzi of Voldarna—Cosmo de' Pazzi—Alessandro de' Pazzi—Alfonso de' Pazzi—Maria Madalena de' Pazzi—Bernardo Rucellai—Cosmo Rucellai—Giovanni Rucellai—Tragedies of Orestes and Rosmonda—Poem of the Bees—Pallas Rucellai—Piero de' Medici—succeeds Lorenzo—His ruinous conduct—Interview with Charles the VIIIth, and disgraceful weakness—Returns to Florence--is expelled and declared a rebel—Heroic firmness of Niccolò Capponi—Deaths of Angelo Politiano, Pico de' Mirandula, and Marsilio Ficino—Piero de' Medici attempts to recover Florence and fails—Savonarola—His execution—His character—Death of Piero de' Medici.*

L.B. ALBERTI

CHAP. VI.

THE progress of architecture was gradual, and it advanced with a regular pace towards greater chastity and beauty. Cronaca and Cecca (*a*) pursued the tract which the great Brunelleschi their countryman had pointed out to them; and the Sixtine chapel, where the Cardinals assemble for their scrutiny on the election of a Pope was built under Sixtus the IVth by Baccio Pintelli a Florentine.

Progress of Architecture—Cronaca—Cecca.

Baccio Pintelli.

(*a*) Cecca distinguished himself principally as a military engineer, as may be collected from his epitaph in Vasari, and was killed after the capture of Piancaldoli whilst he was making some observations previous to the attack of another fortress by the Florentine troops. "Volendo egli misurare alcune altezze in un luogo difficile, fu occiso: percioche havendo messo il capo fuor del muro, per mandar un filo abasso, un prete, che era fra' gl' Aversarii iquali piu temevano l'ingegno del Ceccha, che le forze di tutto il campo, scaricatoli una balestra a panca, gli conficcò di sorte un verettone nella testa, che il poverello di subito, se ne mori." *Vasari.* 1. 447.

CHAP. VI. tine.—If Brunelleschi had not alone the glory of reviving the ancient architecture in Italy, it was a Tuscan that shared it with him. Leo Batista Alberti of a noble Florentine family went deep into the theory, and his inquiries and reflections in his ten books of architecture (*b*) dedicated after his death to Lorenzo de' Medici (*c*), have thrown

L. Batista Alberti.

(*b*) " Cuique libro pro rerum varietate suus inscribitur titulus hunc in modum. Nam primo quidem titulus, Lineamenta; secundo materia; tertio opus; quarto universorum opus; quinto singulorum opus; sexto ornamentum; septimo sacrorum ornamentum; octavo publici profani ornamentum; nono privatorum ornamentum; decimo operum instauratio." *L. B. Alb. in Pref.*

(*c*) Politiano wrote the dedication. " Angelus Politianus Laurentio Medici patrono suo. S. D. Baptista Leo Florentinus, è clarissimâ Albertorum familiâ; vir ingenii elegantis, acerrimi judicii, exquisitissimæque doctrinæ; ubi complura alia egregia monumenta posteris reliquisset, tum libros elucubravit de architecturâ decem, quos propemodum emendatos perpolitosque editurus jamjam in lucem, ac tuo dedicaturus nomini, fato est functus. Hujus frater Bernardus, homo prudens tuique inprimis studiosus, ut unâ operâ tanti viri memoriæ voluntatique consuleret, et tuis in se meritis gratiam referret, descriptos eos ex archetypis atque in volumen redactos, tibi repræsentat Laurenti Medices. Et cupiebat ille quidem, ut ipsum apud te munus auctoremque muneris Baptistam ornarem verbis. Quod ego mihi nullâ ratione statui faciendum, ne tam absoluti operis tamque excellentis viri laudes culpâ deterrerem ingenii. Namque operi quidem ipsi majus multo ex lectione præconium accedet, quam quantum ego ullis verbis consequi possim; auctoris autem laudes non solum epistolæ angustias, sed nostræ omnino paupertatem orationis reformidant. Nullæ quippe hunc hominem latuerunt quamlibet remotæ litteræ, quamlibet reconditæ disciplinæ. Dubitare possis utrum ad oratoriam magis an ad poëticen factus; utrum gravior illi sermo fuerit an urbanior. Ita perscrutatus antiquitatis vestigia est, ut omnem veterum architectandi rationem et deprehenderit et in exemplum revocaverit, sic ut non solum machinas et pegmata, automataque permulta, sed formas quoque ædificiorum admirabiles excogitaverit. Optimus præterea et pictor et statuarius est habitus; cum tamen ita examussim teneret omnia, ut vix pauci singula. Quare ego de illo, ut de Carthagine Salustius, tacere satius puto quam pauca dicere. Huic autem libro, Laurenti, cum vel præcipuum locum in tuâ bibliothecâ velim attribuas, tum eum et ipse legas diligenter, et legendum vulgo publicandumque cures; nam et

thrown great light on every part of the study. Nearly about the same time, the Dream of Poliphilus appeared, an absurd fiction, full of extravagancies in a style almost unintelligible, though sparkling with genius and replete with knowledge respecting the art of building with the Ancients, and with new and original ideas, from which the greatest architects may always derive some advantage. The buildings constructed by Alberti were few in number, but the Choir of the Annunciation in Florence criticised by Vasari (*d*), (notwithstanding his Life of Alberti is the least valuable part of his work), the Gallery of the Ruccellai, the Façade of St. Maria la Nuova, where he was obliged to introduce a little of the Gothic, that the modern additions might correspond with the ancient structure, St. Andrea of Mantua and St. Francesco of Rimini, are some of the works that he directed. The two last churches are master-pieces, and the latter in particular erected by Sigismondo Malatesta at his own expence is one of the most beautiful monuments of modern Italy. A view of the majestic arch of Augustus, that serves for one of the city gates, and the bridge built also by Augus-
tus

ipse dignus est qui volitet docta per ora virûm, et in te jam uno propemodum recumbit desertum ab aliis patrocinium litterarum. Vale."

(*d*) Vasari has certainly criticised his abilities as an architect, but to his moral character he does ample justice. "Fu Leon. B. persona di civilissimi, e lodevoli costumi, amico de' virtuosi, e liberale, et cortese affatto con ognuno, et visse honoratemente, e da gentilhuomo, com'era, tutto il tempo di sua vita." *Vasari*. 1. 370.

tus which crosses the river and forms the port, one of the best preserved remains of antiquity and in its noble and sublime style, might perhaps have inspired Alberti with some great ideas and roused him to exertions beyond even his own natural and superior abilities.

Alberti, to whom architecture is so much indebted, was one of those extraordinary persons that Florence produced so much to her glory. Nature sometimes in a sportive mood makes a prodigal display of all her powers, and unites her rarest and most precious gifts in a single individual. Such was Alberti!—One of the manuscripts in the Strozzi library has summed up his most shining qualities—He excelled in every muscular exercise where his activity and strength were not to be rivalled.—In all the tournaments and carousals he carried off the prizes.—With the javelin he was uncommonly expert, and he threw it with such dexterity and force as to pierce through the strongest bucklers and best cuirasses, and in the manage by a secret and unknown art he rendered the most fiery and impetuous horse (*e*) at once tame and tractable.—His studies took in every science, and his versatile genius was equally conspicuous on every subject, though he preferred the most difficult and abstruse.

(*e*) "Mirum atque rarum in eo, quod ferociores equi, sessorum impatientissimi cum primum conscendisset, sub eo vehementer contremiscebant, atque veluti horrentes subtrepidabant."

abstruse.—Exclusive of his celebrated treatise on architecture he wrote likewise on painting, and he was a perfect master of the civil and canon law.—Original in every thing he wished to introduce the measure of Latin verse into the Tuscan poetry (*f*).—We are in possession of some of his fables and dialogues, in which there is much ingenuity, and he was the author of the Latin comedy of Philodoxus, which he published as an ancient work. The purity of the Latin prevented a discovery of the innocent imposture, of which the younger Aldus Manutius was the dupe, who published the comedy under the title of "Lepidi Comici veteris Fabula."—Music he learned without a master.—On the organ his touch was exquisite, and his compositions were universally applauded for their novelty by the ablest professors.

In music if he had an equal it was only Antonio Squarcialupo, to whom Lorenzo de' Medici addressed a poem.

In the tenth century this science received one of the greatest improvements in Tuscany, for it is only in Europe that written or printed notes are known, and their invention is owing to a native of Arezzo. Other nations and the different people in every civilized part of the world have their music, but Europe is singly in posses-
sion

(*f*) "Questa per estrema miserabile epistola mando,
A te che sprezzi rusticamente noi."

sion of characters which are used to express its tones. The Arabs who cultivated the arts and sciences are certainly without them.—The Persians give the names of their towns and many parts of the human body to their forty-eight sounds.—In China the astonishment of the Emperor Cam-ki and his Mandarins when Father Verbiest minuted down and afterwards sung from his notes some of their frightful airs, is well known.—Ancient Greece and Rome had undoubtedly its scale of music, but we have no clear idea of their mode of expressing its gradations, and we only know that they made use of the letters of their alphabet, which they combined in many different manners and not without much confusion. All these methods swarmed with imperfections, and perhaps in the tenth century they were wholly lost, when a monk of Arezzo so famous under the name of Guy Aretino invented the notes which with some improvements are now the musical language of all Europe.

Painting—Filippo Lippi.

Filippo Lippi was a Florentine painter, and though a libertine monk his profligacy was forgotten in his talents. He died in 1469, and Lorenzo de' Medici erected a marble monument to his memory (*g*). A son of this Ecclesiastic was not inferior to him, and he rigidly adhered to

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(*g*) "Conditus hic ego sum picturæ fama Philippus,
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
Marmoreo tumulo, Medices Laurentius hic me
Condidit; ante humili pulvere tectus eram."

to the "Costume" which his predecessors had neglected.

Andrea del Castagno.

Andrea del Castagno was not the least celebrated of the masters who distinguished themselves under Lorenzo de' Medici. His principal work, however, must have been on a very disagreeable subject, as it was an exact representation of the punishment of the Pazzi painted in Fresco, by the order of the magistrates, on the walls of the old palace. All the conspirators who had been punished on the occasion were exhibited hanging by the neck or heels. Such attitudes and such a scene must have been disgustful, notwithstanding Vasari has informed his readers the picture was generally admired by the connoisseurs (*h*). The powerful cry of public vengeance had insisted on the subject, but it is to be regretted that in other instances a gloomy superstition or the wretched taste of monks and friars engaged the greatest modern artists to consecrate the flower of their talents to the representations of lamentable sufferings or dreadful punishments.

(*h*) "L'Anno 1478 quando dalla famiglia de' Pazzi, et altri loro adherenti, et congiurati fu morto in S. Maria del Fiore Giuliano de' Medici, e Lorenzo suo fratello ferito fu deliberato dalla signoria, che tutti quelli della congiura fussino, come traditori, dipinti nella facciata del palagio del Podesta; onde essendo questa opera offerta ad Andrea, egli come servitore, et obligato alla casa de' Medici, l'accettò molto ben volentieri; e messovisi la fece, tanto bella, che fu uno stupore; Ne si potrebbe, dire quantá arte, e giudizio si conosceva in que' personaggi ritratti per lo piu di naturale, et impiccati per i piedi in strane attitudini, e tutte varie, e bellissime."

Vasari, 1. 399.

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ments.—In the boasted churches of Italy and Flanders almost every altar-piece is either a severe flagellation or a doleful crucifixion.—St. Stephen expires under a shower of stones from the violence of his persecutors in one place; in another St. Bartholomew is streaming with blood, flayed alive, the nerves and muscles laid bare; St. Sebastian is pierced with a cloud of arrows; the Baptist's head is convulsed in a charger; and the gridiron of St. Laurence is a companion to the cauldron of St. John.—Human monsters with the last refinement of malignity are even on the point of sawing (*i*) the delicate bosom of a beautiful female, whose tongue had been already torn out and appears still palpitating.—Just Heavens, what subjects!—Were Zeuxes and Apelles to revisit us, what an opinion would they form of such horrible designs!

Andrea del Castagno's conspiracy of the Pazzi, though not

(*i*) We should at present scarcely believe such punishments had ever existed, if they were not transmitted to us on authority too powerful to be opposed and evidence too certain to be doubted. Suetonius, in speaking of the cruelty of Caligula, expressly states, "MEDIOS SERRA dissecuit (*Calig. c.* 27.), and Dion Cassius informs us the Jews were equally wanting in humanity. "Πολλους δε και ΜΕΣΟΥΣ απο ΚΟΡΥΦΗΣ ΔΙΕΠΡΙΟΝ." (*Hist. Rom. lib.* 68. *vol.* 2. 1146. *Hamburg.* 1752). We learn also from Shaw, "that the Western Moors use the barbarous punishment of sawing the body of the criminal in two; expressive probably of 'διχοτομειν,' *Matt.* 24. 51. *Luke* 12. 46. (which we render cutting asunder or cutting off) no less than of 'πριειν,' *Heb.* 11. 37. which is translated sawing asunder. For which purpose they prepare two boards, of a proper length and breadth, and having tied the criminal betwixt them, they proceed to the execution, by beginning at the head."
Travels in Barbary, 254, 4to. 1757.

not less disgusting, is neither a scripture piece nor a martyrdom. The Florentines had taste when it was at liberty to exert itself, but revenge entered deeply into their character and influenced their temper, and these ignominious and vindictive punishments flattered their passions.

The ancient palace contains also a picture, by Giottino, of their tyrant Gualtieri de Brienne, Duke of Athens, which is an everlasting testimony of their hatred and abomination of him. "Habetis in prætorio vestro," writes Filelfo, "conspicuum monumentum obscuræ et "truculentissimæ servitutis, depictam Ducis Athenarum "imaginem." Gualtieri had not the most pleasing countenance. Whilst the likeness however is preserved, it is caricatured, and his mental qualities are represented under the vilest and most odious emblems. Snakes and basilisks are twisted in his hair, peacock's feathers, the symbols of pride, dangle from the ears of the stupid ass, toads are leaping and spitting round his heart, and, least the spectator should mistake the person, an immense label in the mouth proclaims his name and titles.

From the Pazzi conspiracy Andrea del Castagno received the less honourable name of Andrea degli Impicati (*a*), or "Andrew of the Gallows," to which, indeed, from

(*a*) "Laqual opera perche piacque a tutta la citta, et particolarmente agl'inten-

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from his vicious course of life, he had some other claims. With his moral conduct we have at present no concern, and he interests us but as a painter. Of the Florentine school he was the first person that made use of oil (*b*), an innovation discovered in the low countries; his drawing was correct, his colouring weak and feeble.

Pesello Peselli. Sandro Boticelli. Antonio Pollajuoli.

Pesello Peselli, superior to all his cotemporaries in flower-painting, was the Vanhuyssem, or Van Os of the day.—Sandro Boticelli was esteemed for his designs.—Antonio Pollajuoli attached himself principally to naked figures,

denti delle cose di pittura, fu cagione, che da quella in poi, non più Andrea del Castagno, ma Andrea de gl'Impiccati fusse chiamato." *Vasari*, 1. 399.

(*b*) "Era nel suo tempo in Firenze un tal Domenico da Venezia, pittore di buon nome, col quale egli (Andrea) aveva fintamente legata grande amicizia, affine di cavargli del mano la maestria di colorire a olio, che allora in Toscana non era da alcun altro praticata, nè meno saputa, fuori che da Domenico, come gli ruiscì da fare." *Baldin. Dec.* iii. *sec.* v.—"The invention of painting in oil, though introduced so late into Italy, is probably more ancient than has generally been supposed. It is commonly attributed to the Flemish artists, Hubert and John Van Eyck, who flourished about the year 1400; but Professor Lessing, in a small treatise '*sur l'ancienneté de la peinture à l' huile*,' printed at Brunswick in 1774, has endeavoured to shew that this art is of much greater antiquity. His suggestions have since been confirmed by the researches of M. de Mechel of Basle, who, in arranging the immense collection of pictures of the Imperial gallery of Vienna, has discovered several pieces painted in oil, as early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Of these the earliest is a picture by Thomas de Mutina, a Bohemian gentleman; the others are by Theodoric, of Prague, and Nic. Wurmser, of Strasbourg; both artists at the court of the Emperor Charles IV." (*Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, vol.* 2. *p.* 186.)—I have borrowed the whole of this from Mr. Roscoe.

figures, and distinguished himself by his profound attention to the theory of the muscles.—A ray of light from Michelagnolo is reflected on Domenico Ghirlandi, his early master.—Luca Signorelli, of Cortona, who excelled in his drawings, put the finishing hand to the perfection of the art.—Its historian, speaking of one of his capital works at Orvieto, observes, "He was not surprised Mi-"chelagnolo had always testified the highest esteem for "the works of this master, and that in his own celebrated "picture of the Last Judgment, he had borrowed many "of his ideas, his angels, his demons, and the disposition "of the heavens, and many other things, as may be easily "discovered on inspection (*c*)." Yet, after the sentiments of Vasari, it will be only just to introduce the reflections of his last editor Botarelli. "If the author "had either seen or recollected Signorelli's work, he "would not have spoken so positively of such a decided "imitation. There are indeed angels as well as demons in "Signorelli's picture and Michelagnolo's, but the rest "of the two performances has no resemblance, except "in the many very difficult fore-shortenings of the "figures." Richardson, who had not seen the picture at

Domenico Ghirlandi. Luca Signorelli.

(*c*) "Onde io non mi maraviglio se l'opere di Luca furono da Michelagnolo sempre sommamente lodate, ne se in alcune cose del suo divino giudizio, che fece nella Cappella furono da lui gentilmente tolte in parte dall' invenzioni di Luca, come sono Angeli, demoni, l'ordine de' cieli, e altre cose, nelle quali esso Michelagnolo immitò l'andar di Luca, come puo vedere ognuno." *Vasari* 1. 528.

at Orvieto, cites Vasari, without any additional authority, and it is to be wished that a print was taken from Signorelli, that the public might judge of the important question on the merit of the two masters. Yet, perhaps Signorelli's glory is alone concerned. If Michelagnolo is proved to have borrowed from Signorelli very liberally, he will, notwithstanding, be Michelagnolo. —Superior genius is entitled to superior liberties.—Plato, Virgil, Cicero, Rafaello, Le Brun, Descartes, Moliere, and Boileau, when charged with plagiarism, laughed at the accusation, and treated its authors with contempt. Virgil said, " The club was more easily forced out of the hand " of Hercules than a verse stolen from Homer." Boileau admitted, with a caustic smile, he was only " a beggar " clothed from the pillage of Horace;" and Moliere can- " didly avowed that a certain scene was not his own, but as it was worthy of him, he only retook his property wherever he found it. An inferior writer, a poet of the " Minorum Gentium," if he values his own credit, must be infinitely more cautious and reserved.

Oderino di Gubio. Francesco di Bologna.

Miniature painting has been of long standing, though the first artists in this branch of the profession were not Tuscans. Oderino di Gubio, however, and Francesco di Bologna belong to an age so very distant, that Dante mentions them (*d*), and the art flourished afterwards in the

(*d*) " . . . . Oderisi,
L'honor d'Agobbio et l'honor di quell'arte,

the highest perfection at Florence. In the ancient library of Philip, Duke of Burgundy, the founder of the Order of the Golden Fleece, which remained many years in dust and in disorder at Brussels, till Prince Charles of Lorraine had it put in order, a number of manuscripts were discovered that were ornamented with the most beautiful miniatures. One, in particular, which Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary, presented to Charles the Vth, appears to have been written and illuminated at Florence, and it is considered as the most valuable work of the kind now extant.

Invention of Prints. Maso Finiguerra.

The invention of prints, or copper-plates, was then a new discovery. Maso Finiguerra, a Florentine, the father of this art, which gives an eternity beyond the power of the pencil, usually traced impressions on clay, instead of wax, of the subject he intended to engrave on silver. With the assistance of melted sulphur poured into his mould, and rubbing it with oil and soot, he soon arrived at the method of taking off what he had engraved on his silver; and at last, by moistening his paper, and the addition of a roller, he succeeded in such a manner that his figures not only appeared as if they had been printed, but even drawn by the hand. This discovery produced us engraved

Ch'alluminar è chiamata in Parisi.
. . . . più ridon la carte,
Che pennelleggia Franco Bolognese,"

engraved prints, by which the pictures of the first masters became accessible to the public, and it has been gradually improving. Finiguerra had not the meanness to be jealous of his art, or make a mystery of his experiment, and he had no sooner communicated them than Baccio Baldini and Antonio Pollajuoli contrived to imitate, and even improve on them. They were not the masters, however, who were the most celebrated in the art, and this honour was not reserved for Tuscany.

Baccio Baldini

Vasari has been principally followed in what has been said on the subject of the invention of copper-plates, or prints, and his opinion has been since confirmed by Filippo Baldinucci, in his Lives of the Painters, and the Senator Buonaroti, in the preface to his "Observations on "the Medals of Cardinal Carpegna's Cabinet." This origin of prints was not indeed disputed till Monsr. Mariette, a learned modern connoisseur, thought proper to throw some doubts on it.—His Pyrrhonism rests on negative presumption.—Not a single print, he asserts, has been produced, after the most minute inquiries and laborious researches, with either the name or cypher of Maso, though there have been a few of Pollajuoli and Botticelli. There is not one in the magnificent collection of the late Prince Eugene, that Monsr. Mariette classed in person, nor in the cabinet of the late French King, one of the most complete in Europe, and richer than any other in prints of the first or earliest masters. The Chevalier Ga-

burri

burri has likewise carefully examined every collection at Florence with the same ill success. An ancient engraving has been only found of the combat of Hercules with the Lernæan Hydra, at the bottom of which there are the letters I. F. S. which, read from right to left, may signify "Thomas Finiguerra incidit," but when there is a bare possibility, all argument can be only founded on conjecture.

An old edition of Dante, printed by Nicola della Magna, is full of prints, and they have been suspected to have been Finiguerra's; though if they had been engraved by the obscure process described by Vasari, they would have been much more coarse and ordinary. Exclusive of this circumstance, Vasari attributes these prints to Sandro Botticelli, and according to the Chevalier Gaburri, on a view of the picture of this master at the Annunciation at Florence, the resemblance is so very striking as to identify the artist. The learned Abbé Antonio Maria Salvini assures his readers there is another edition of Dante, which has its margin filled with prints, and the Chevalier Gaburri believes he is in possession of a few of its leaves. "The figures," he observes, "without a name, "without a cypher, and without a date, are as bad and "coarse as it is possible for them to be, and they appear "to have been struck off in the infancy of the art; from "which circumstance Maso Finiguerra may probably "have been the author. Yet this must be still conjec-"ture."

"ture." One observation may be made, that the names of the artists began but to be introduced when the art was multiplied and the masters numerous. Whilst there was only a single artist of the kind, without a rival or a predecessor, it was not necessary to authenticate his works either by his name or cypher. The French connoisseur also, though he has doubted of Finiguerra's invention, has not mentioned any other person that has a right to the honour, and speaks only in a vague manner of some German prints of an earlier date than any he had seen in Italy.—If Maso Finiguerra is not however to be allowed to have invented copper-plates, he was an excellent goldsmith and engraver in the time of Lorenzo de' Medici, and in the Florentine gallery a great collection of his designs may be yet seen.

Medals—Vettore Pisano.

One of Andrea del Castagno's scholars, Vettore Pisano, quitted the pencil to apply himself to the engraving of medals, and few artists have equalled him. Lorenzo de' Medici had formed the rarest and most precious cabinet of them, selected from all that were to be found in Italy, and their remains are still preserved in Florence, and at the Castle of Capo de Monte, near Naples, where his Catholic Majesty has deposited the principal curiosities he inherited from the Farnese family.

Lorenzo's fondness for engraved precious stones is well known, as well as the multitude that he amassed together.

ther. They are often to be met with in Italy, France, and England, and may be known by the "LAUR. MED." though this inscription was an enigma for the Cavaliere Paulo Maffei (*a*), which was singular, as he was an Italian.

An antique stone served Lorenzo for a seal, that belongs to the present Duke of Tuscany, and is of uncommon beauty. Innumerable copies, ancient as well as modern, have been cut after it, and they are so many evidences of its value. Apollo, in a noble attitude, holds his lyre, and is looking at Marsyas with contempt, who is fastened to a tree, with his hands pinioned behind his back, and waiting the punishment of his insolence. The young Scythian charged with the execution of the sentence, is at Apollo's feet, and seems to be imploring his clemency, and pleading for the prisoner. The quiver with the arrows of the deity hangs from the branch of a tree, and the instrument that had been employed in the unfortunate contest is thrown on the ground. This stone, mounted in a ring, once decorated the bloody hand of Nero, and the odious parricide used to seal with it his destructive orders.—His ambition to be reckoned the first musician of his age is on record, and by the choice of his seal he might perhaps be desirous of intimidating any rivals from a competition with him. Perhaps also he

(*a*) *Gemme Ant. figurate, tom.* 1. *pl.* 34. 40.

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he turned to his ring, and took Apollo for his model, when he directed in person the punishment of the singer Menedemus, of whose talents he was jealous, and whose shrieks, he said, were so musical and melodious in his ears.—Lorenzo de' Medici had no such criminal delights, and he admired this antique from the wonderful beauty of its workmanship.—His passion for engravings was not however confined to antiques, for he collected a number of artists, placed them near him, distributed their work to them, animated them by his favours, and the art itself by these encouragements acquired new life and vigour.

A young Florentine had discovered an extraordinary genius, and Lorenzo took him immediately under his patronage and protection, and was at the expence of his education. The ingenious scholar fully answered every expectation that had been formed of his talents, and in a little time his engravings on Cornelians excelled every thing that came even from his master's hands. Italy considered him as the restorer of the art of engraving on precious stones, and from the species on which he was particularly eminent he had the name of Giovanni di Cornalino.

Giovanni di Cornalino.

Amongst many of his other works a very large Cornelian was very much admired, that had a likeness of Savonarola on it, and it was indeed his master-piece.

Perhaps

Perhaps the celebrity of this specious hypocrite, who was idolized by the people, contributed to his prodigious success, and recommended him to the public favour. The choice of a subject is sometimes a matter of great importance, and those artists who aspire but to a quick and transitory reputation should make choice of a popular subject and the hero of the day. They who look forwards to a maturer and more lasting fame will naturally despise these little manœuvres; a more ample career is opened to them, and if their merit is only equal a more durable reward will crown their labours.

Giovanni di Cornalino and his scholars were the first persons that again brought into fashion this art of engraving on precious stones; an art so difficult and delicate, on a small surface, as to resemble Nature in the formation of her insects.

Ingenuity and perseverance will at last triumph over almost every obstacle, and we may live in hopes, though they are not yet accomplished, that the Moderns will by degrees ascend up to the ancient masters, and equal a Pyrgoteles, Dioscorides, Gnaios, Nichomachus, Onesus, Sostratus, and Solon.—The existence of the last artist has indeed been questioned, but the Medusa of the Strozzi collection, so famous for its beauty and perfection, ascertains the fact. It has the word "Σολωνος" on it, and incredulity itself must be overpowered with the well-known

known Hercules, or, if the character is disputed, the Gladiator with the inscription of "Σολων εποιει," at the bottom of the engraving.

Sculpture. Didiero di Settigano.—Mino di Fesola.

In the age of Lorenzo de' Medici we read of some able sculptors though not one of the first talents.—Didiero di Settigano, and Mino di Fesola have been long forgotten.—Bernetto di Majano erected by Lorenzo's orders the mausoleum of Giotto in the cathedral at Florence, and the Venetians raised to the memory of their general Coglione the only equestrian statue in their city.

Bernetto di Majano.

Andrea Verocchio.

It was the work of Andrea Verocchio a Florentine, a scholar of Donatello and Ghiberti, though inferior to his masters. The statue has, notwithstanding, merit, and has been attended with a singular circumstance, which shews to what meanness persons will descend even from one of the noblest incentives of human nature the love of glory, when they are more solicitous to obtain it than to deserve it. The words "Alexander Leopardus fecit "opus" were lately perceived on the horse of bronze in Coglione's statue. This Leopardus was a very ordinary sculptor employed by the Venetians near the beginning of the sixteenth century to make the base of the statue and to place it. Dissatisfied with his cotemporaries, and determined to usurp, if it were possible, a reputation that was not his due, he engraved on the horse's belly the inscription, that has been mentioned, and covered it with a composition likely to conceal it for many years.

This

This precaution was not in his opinion quite sufficient, and he directed the following epitaph to be inserted on his tomb in the Cloister of St. Maria dell' Orto. CHAP. VI.

"ALEXANDER LEOPARDUS
SIBI SUISQUE POS.
ILL. BARTHOLOMÆI COLLI
STATUÆ BASIS
IDEM OPIFEX
M. D. X."

This dubious epitaph does not express in direct terms the artist of the statue, and he was in hopes when Verocchio was forgotten, it might in conjunction with the inscription on the horse give him the credit of the whole.

It was with regret that Lorenzo de' Medici observed sculpture had declined since the days of Donatello and Ghiberti, and for the purpose of encouraging a new race of great men in this branch of the arts, he collected a multitude of Basso Relievo, statues, and the precious remains of antiquity, which now ornament the Florentine gallery, and established a school within his gardens.

Bertoldo.

Bertoldo an eminent sculptor was appointed the inspector and guardian of the Seminary, who had also distinguished himself by his casts of bronze, though he has been unaccountably neglected by Vasari. A scholar of Donatello, chosen by Lorenzo de' Medici to restore the Grecian

CHAP. VI. Grecian statuary and revive sculpture at Florence, had certainly some pretensions to the historian's notice, less equivocal than those of many artists on whose lives he has expatiated.

Lorenzo's cares were amply repaid, and his school under the direction of Bertoldo became the flourishing nursery of many great men and celebrated artists.—The immortal Michelagnolo rose like a cedar amongst them, and even the anecdotes of his infancy are interesting. This youth, destined to become hereafter so illustrious, had never touched a block of marble, when the bust of an old fawn, laughing very ridiculously, was placed in the gardens. Young Agnolo immediately set to work with his chisel, on a copy of it, and succeeded in such a manner that Lorenzo was stupified and astonished when he saw it. Observing, however, to his little friend he had deviated from his model in leaving the mouth more open and the teeth visible, he told him with a smile, "Old "men have seldom all their teeth." Agnolo made no reply, but as soon as Lorenzo had left him he broke some of the teeth of his fawn so naturally, that the stumps appeared remaining, and when Lorenzo discovered the next day what had been done he shed tears of joy at the child's simplicity, who had given such a promise of his future glory (*b*).—That promise he fulfilled!

Michelagnolo.

This

(*b*) "Alcuni giorni si misse a contrafare con un pezzo di marmo una testa che

This first effort of Michelagnolo's genius, the head of the old fawn with its broken teeth and jaw, is still preserved in the keeper's room in the gallery of the Medici, and according to the connoisseurs, it is, without exaggeration, as beautiful as if it were fresh from the chisel of an ancient Grecian master. There is a print of it at the end of the dedication of the life of Michelagnolo written by his faithful Condivi, in Mons$^{r.}$ Gori's new edition, but it is ill executed and does no honour to the sublime artist's memory.

Character of Lorenzo de' Medici.

The various accomplishments and great qualities of Lorenzo de' Medici were not sullied by a single vice.—Yet we are not to consider him as an austere philosopher.—He detested pride, and austerity is the pride of virtue.—Horace would have seen revived in him the "Mitis sapientia Læli."—To guard against the poisonous breath of envy is the most useful secret for men of elevated

v'era d'un Fauno vecchio antico, et grinzo, che era guasta nel naso, e nella bocca rideva, dove a Michelagnolo, che non haveva mai piu tocco marmo ne scarpegli, successe il contrafarla cosi bene, che il Mag. ne stupi: et visto che fuor' della antica testa di suo fantasia gli haveva trapanato la bocca, et fattogli la lingua, et vedere tutti i denti, burlando qual S. con piaceuolezza, come era suo solito, gli disse; tu doveresti pur sape che i vecchi non hanno mai tutti i denti, et sempre qualcuno ne manca loro parve a Michelagnolo in quella semplicità temendo, et amando quel S. che gli dicesse il vero: ne prima si fu partito, che subito gli roppe un dente, et trapano la gengia, di maniera che pareva che gli fussi caduto, et aspettando con desiderio il ritorno del Mag. che venuto, et veduto la semplicità, et bontà di Michelagnolo, sene rise piu d'una volta contandola per miracolo a suoi amici."

Vasari, 2. 719.

CHAP. VI.

vated rank or in exalted stations; and the favourites of nature or of fortune, who rise above their cotemporaries ought to make it their peculiar study.—Lorenzo's affability secured him against jealousies of every kind.—With every intellectual advantage that could adorn the mind, with every virtue that could warm the heart, there is scarcely an elogium which he does not richly merit.—The extravagant one, perhaps, may be alone excepted, which the Count de Gramont bestowed on his brother the Count de Guiche. "Du surplus de l'excellent qui était en lui, "l'on eut composé deux sujets parfaits."

Machiavel has observed with some apparent censure, his mixing in the amusements of his children was rather inconsistent (*c*) with the master of Florence and the arbiter of Italy.—Is there a spectacle on earth more touching than to see a great man, like Lorenzo, laying down the burthen of his glory in the bosom of nature? In the eyes of innocence and virtue, he adds the last finish to his character, and appears most amiable, when he condescends to divest himself of his dignity, and enters into the puerile amusements of Leo the Xth or the Duke of Nemours.

Too

(*c*) "—— Si dilettasse d' uomini faceti e mordaci, e di giuochi puerili, più che a tanto uomo non pareva si convenisse; in modo che molte volte fu visto trai suoi figliuoli e figliuole trai loro trastulli mescolarsi." *Machiavelli, tom.* 1. *lib.* 8. 450.

Too great a sensibility to the charms of the female sex, a foible to which the noblest and the best of hearts are sometimes prone, has also been matter of reproach to him.—His passionate admiration of the sex it would be absurd to contradict (*a*), and a passionate admiration of the sex is generally the source of a thousand weaknesses. If Lorenzo loved with ardour, he loved, however, with discretion.—His galantries gave no offence to his fellow-citizens because they had no influence on his public conduct or the public morals.—The line was correctly drawn, and his gravity and gaiety were so distinctly separated, as to give the idea of two different characters in a single individual (*b*).

Necessary to his country, of which he was the idol, in the bosom of the arts and sciences, and happy as far as friendship, esteem, attachment, and the veneration of the world have any influence on happiness, Lorenzo had a thousand links, that rendered life endearing.—Violent stomachic complaints, to which he was often subject, had

(*a*) " —— Ancorachè fusse nelle cose veneree maravigliosamente involto."
Machiavelli, *tom.* 1. *lib.* 8. 450.

(*b*) " Tantochè a considerare in quello e la vita leggiera voluttuosa e la grave, si vedeva in lui essere due persone diverse quasi con impossibile congiunzione congiunte." *Machiavelli. tom.* 1. *lib.* 8. 450.

Xenophon has the expression, " δυο γαρ—σαφως εχω ψυχας." *Xenoph. Oper.* 145. *Francft.* 1596.

had given him, notwithstanding, many intimations that the brittle chain of human existence would prematurely snap, but if he foresaw that he was to die, he did not forget to live.—At the age of forty-four, in the midst of his brilliant career, the fatal hour arrived.—The King of Terrors had long threatened, and Lorenzo viewed the spectre, as he approached to seize his prey, with the intrepidity of the Hero, and the confidence of the Christian.—When every hope had given way, and his expected dissolution was announced to him, his weeping attendants were the only persons in distress or consternation.—Lorenzo was calm and cheerful (*c*).—Politiano, who was present, has given us the history of his last moments, in which Lorenzo's firmness, and the tenderness of his surrounding friends are strongly marked.—It was in the month of April, 1492, when he ceased to live and breathed his last within their arms.—His domestics are said to have thrown the physician into a well, who had failed in Lorenzo's case. It is certain, however, that Leonius, a person of great eminence in his profession, having egregiously mistaken his patient's complaint, quitted his practice, and did not long survive him (*d*).

His last Illness

His Death.

The

(*c*) "Diceres indictam cæteris, uno excepto Laurentio, mortem. Sic scilicet unus ex omnibus ipse nullam doloris, nullam perturbationis, nullam tristitiæ significationem dabat, consuetumque animi vigorem, constantiam, æquabilitatem, magnitudinem, ad extremum usque spiritum producebat." *Epist. Politian.—Jacobo Antiquario suo.*—15 *Calend. Junii*, 1492.

(*d*) Various accounts have been given of the death of Leonius.—Piero Ricci or

The consequences of Lorenzo's death afford one of the most striking examples of the influence, that the prudence and the talents of a single illustrious individual have on the public interest and happiness. His loss was a national calamity, considered as the scourge of

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Petrus Crinitus has supposed him to have drowned himself. "Sed enim quod nuper accidit in Petro Leonio, mirificum certe visum est: quando is, et in philosophia vir excellens, ac prudentia propè egregia in puteum se Florentino suburbano immersit." (*lib.* 3. *cap.* 9.) This is also supposed to have been the case by Valerianus (*De infel. literat. lib.* 1.). Politiano seems to speak of it as a fact. "Quidam illud etiam (ut sunt ingenia) pro monstro interpretantur, quod excellentissimus (ita enim habebatur) hujus ætatis medicus, quando ars cum præscitaque fefellerant, animum desponderit, puteoque se sponte demerserit, ac principi ipsi Medicæ (si vocabulum spectes) familiæ sua nece parentaverit. (*Epist. Ang. Politian.—Jacobo Antiquaris suo,* 15 *Calend. Junii* 1492.). And Mr. Roscoe has given in his Appendix the following extract.

"A dì 8. d' Aprile 1492. in Domenica circa ore 5. di notte morì il Magnifico Lorenzo di Piero di Cosimo de' Medici, a Careggi, d' età d' anni 44. non finiti, il quale era stato malato circa a mesi due d' una strana infermità, con grandissimi dolori di stomaco e di capo, che mai potettono i Medici conoscere la sua malattia. Dubitossi di veleno, e massime perchè un Mess. Pierlione da Spuleti singolarissimo Medico, che era stato alla cura sua in tutta la malattia, la mattina seguente dopo la sua morte, fu trovato essere stato gittato in un pozzo a S. Cervagio alla Villa di Francesco di Ruberto Martelli, dove era stato trafugato, perchè certi famigli di Lorenzo l' avevano voluto ammazzare, per sospetto che non avessi avvelenato Lorenzo, ma non se ne vedde segno alcuno." *Ex Diario anonymi cujusdam Florentini, quod extat in Bibliotheca Magliabechiana.*

If Leonius really died a violent death, it possibly might have been suggested in the moment of resentment by recollection of the obsolete customs of a nation who had once overrun Italy. A law of the Visigoths (let not the modern part of the Faculty startle at the citation) directed an unsuccessful surgeon to be delivered up to the family of his deceased patient, "ut quod de eo facere voluerint, habeant potestatem." *L.* XI. *tit.* 1. *tom.* 4. 435.

of Providence (*e*) by his afflicted country, and Italy dated from his death the long train of misfortunes she afterwards experienced (*f*)!

Lorenzo died esteemed and venerated by all the cotemporary

(*e*) Even Machiavel is rather superstitious, and imagines his death to have been marked by supernatural appearances. "E come dalla sua morte ne dovesse nascere grandissime rovine, ne mostrò il cielo molti evidentissimi segni; trai quali l' altissima sommità del tempio di Santa Reparata fu da un fulmine con tanta furia percossa, che gran parte di quel pinnacolo rovinò con stupore e maraviglia di ciascuno. (*Machiavelli. tom.* 1. *lib.* 8. 450.).—Politiano enters more into the prevailing ideas. "Prima porro vigilia, cum cœlum nubibus de improviso fœdaretur, continuo Basilicæ ipsius maximæ fastigium, quod opere miro singularem toto terrarum orbe testudinem supereminet, tactum de cœlo est, ita ut vastæ quæpiam dejicerentur moles, atque in eam potissimum partem, qua Medicæ convisuntur ædes, vi quadam horrenda, et impetu, marmora immania torquerentur. In quo illud etiam præscito non caruit, quod inaurata una pila, quales aliæque in eodem fastigio conspiciuntur, excussa fulmine est, ne non ex ipso quoque insigni proprium ejus familiæ detrimentum portenderetur. Sed et illud memorabile, quod ut primum detonuit, statim quoque serenitas reddita. Qua autem nocte obiit Laurentius, stella solito clarior, ac grandior, suburbano imminens, in quo is animam agebat, illo ipso temporis articulo decidere, extinguique visa, quo compertum deinde est eum vita demigrasse. Quin excurrisse etiam faces trinoctio perpetuo de Fæsulanis montibus, supraque id templum, quo reliquiæ conduntur Medicæ gentis, scintillasse nonnihil, moxque evanuisse feruntur. Quid? quod et leonum quoque nobilissimum par in ipsa quâ publice continentur cavea, sic in pugnam ferociter concurrerit, ut alter pessime acceptus, alter etiam ſeto sit datus. Arreti quoque supra arcem ipsam, geminæ perdiu arsisse flammæ, quasi Castores feruntur, ac lupa identidem sub mœnibus ululatus terrificos edidisse." *Epist. Aug. Politian.—Jacopo Antiquar. suo.* 15 *Calend.* 1492.

(*f*) Ma se quelli avessero cagione giusta di dolersi, lo dimostrò poco dipoi l' effetto; perchè restata Italia priva del consiglio suo, non si trovò modo per quelli che rimasero, nè d' empire nè di frenare l' ambizione di Lodovico Sforza governatore del Duca di Milano. Per la qual cosa subito morto Lorenzo cominciarono a nascere quelli cattivi semi, i quali non dopo molto tempo, non sendo vivo chi gli sapesse spegnere, rovinarono, ed ancora rovinato l' Italia.

Machiavelli, tom. 1. *lib.* 8. 451.

temporary Sovereigns.—Ferdinand of Arragon, and Luigi Sforza, the Governor of Milan, who were persons of not very common understandings, consulted him as an oracle.—Innocent the VIIIth made him ample recompence for the injuries of his predecessor, and he received many proofs of friendship and regard from Alphonso King of Portugal, and Mathias King of Hungary. These two Princes, though separated from the Medici by so vast a distance, had such a congeniality of mind with Lorenzo, as intimately connected them together in spite of any intervening obstacle.—Louis the XIth of France had not a soul like Lorenzo, but he was interested in his good opinion, and shewed him many great marks of kindness and respect.—It was the homage Vice is sometimes obliged to pay to Virtue.—The Turkish Sultans Mahomet and Bajazet, determined enemies of the other Christian powers, revered his character (*g*), and complied with every request he made to them.—Even the ascendency of his genius and his virtues was felt at Cairo, and the Caliph forwarded to him a number of presents as testimonies of

(*g*) "Questo suo modo di vivere, questa sua prudenza e fortuna fu dai principi non solo d' Italia, ma longinqui da quella con ammirazione conosciuta e stimata. Fece Mattia Re d' Ungheria molti segni dell' amore gli portava. Il Soldano con suoi oratori e suoi doni lo visitò e presentò. Il gran Turco gli pose nelle mani Bernardo Bandini del suo fratello ucciditore. Le quali cose lo facevano tenere in Italia mirabile." (*Machiavelli, tom.* 1. *lib.* 8. 450.) It was a singular spectacle to see an assassin sent back in chains by the Turkish Sultan, that the Father of the Christian Church had instigated and encouraged!— With the thinking part of the world a reformation could be at no great distance.

of his esteem, which were preserved a long time in the arsenal at Florence.

The sacred term of Great has been often ridiculously prostituted to decorate the wicked and the weak.—Lorenzo de' Medici deserved it.—Cold and unfeeling must be the heart that does not justice to his merit!

Ye friends of letters and the arts, whose happy fortune carries you to Florence, when ye visit his tomb ye will scatter flowers over it, and as your bosom swells with a tributary sigh, ye will pause and say, "Here lies Lorenzo!"—The Mausoleum is in the celebrated Sacristy of the Medici, and his statue, in the style of Michelagnolo, is strongly expressive of his character. He appears seated, his head supported by one of his hands, and in an attitude of deep reflection, the Lorenzo "Il Pensieroso," as he has been sometimes called, though he had also the title of Lorenzo the Magnificent, or more simply that of "Il Magnifico,"—"The Magnificent."—The beautiful surname of "The Father of the Muses," was likewise often applied to him, less glorious indeed than that of "The Father of his Country," but in him they were united.—"Vale mel gentium," in the jocose words of Augustus, "ebur ex Etruriâ, laser Aretinum, Tyberinum "margaritum, berille Porsennæ!"

By his consort Clarice, of the noble Roman family of Ursino,

Ursino, he left three sons, Piero, Giovanni, and Giuliano, and three daughters, Lucretia, Magdalena, and Contesina de' Medici.

Giuliano de' Medici.

Paulus Iovius, in two simple words, has left one of the finest elogiums on Giuliano, the brother of Lorenzo, "Alter Laurentius," another Lorenzo.—He was assassinated when only twenty-eight years of age, and if he had not time to display all his full-blown virtues, it was his misfortune, and not his fault. The two brothers lived in the happiest state of affection and fraternal union, and inaccessible to jealousy they divided the political authority of the family between them.

"Nec tanta Ebalios tenuit concordia fratres,
Nec tanto Atridas fœdere junxit amor,
Implicuit quanto Medicum duo pectora nexu
Mitis amor, concors gratia, pura fides;
Unum velle animis, unum est quoque nolle duobus,
Corque sibi alterna dant capiuntque manu:
Esse quid hoc dicam Juli, et tu maxime Laurens,
Anne duos una mente calere putem (*h*)?"

The discharge of our duty, it may be said, has no right to a great degree of praise, but such instances of domestic attachment

(*h*) *Pol. lib. Epigram. in Op. Ald.* 1498.

attachment are always pleasing; and in the corrúption of Italian morals in the fifteenth century they were entitled to a more particular commendation because they were so uncommon. History has preşerved a circumstance which heightens our compassion at Giuliano's tragic end.—He had always wished to be more than ordinarily attentive to the Pazzi family, and to shew them every friendship. They recompensed him with their daggers!—Some writers have accused Lorenzo of having indiscreetly pushed things to extremities with the Pazzi; yet from his known coolness, his wisdom and moderation, it is not probable.—Admitting the fact, the error of a great man may have its use.—It may serve as a warning lesson against any similar mistakes; and as the satellites of Jupiter, even when eclipsed, are still serviceable to the mariner, the temporary obscurity of the star of Medici may not be without advantage to the politician.

Giuliano was the father of a posthumous son, who made a figure in the Italian History as Clement the VIIth, and will be the subject of our future contemplation. All the historians, Machiavel excepted, acknowledge his illegitimacy, but as the History of Florence was dedicated to Clement the VIIth, Machiavel has, to appearance, for once renounced his audacious regard for truth, and with the view of flattering his patron has concealed a circumstance in which he was so much interested. Clement's

mother

mother was not Giuliano's mistress that Politian speaks of (*a*), who was a native of Genoa, and married in Tuscany.

Gulielmo de' Pazzi.

Cosmo de' Medici, the Father of his People, had not been inattentive to the rising interest of the Pazzi family; and on a discovery of a few seeds of jealousy shooting up against the Medici, he formed a scheme of uniting the discordant interests by the marriage of his grand-daughter Bianca with Gulielmo, the eldest nephew of Giacopo de' Pazzi. The event did not produce the fruit expected from it, or rather miserably disappointed his expectations (*b*).—Whether Gulielmo entered into the conspiracy against his brother-in-law is not certain. Historians have thought differently, but he seems to have been privy to it, and he was only saved from the fury of the people by Bianca's

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(*a*) "Io non so qual tua mente in vano auguria,
Non d'altar degna, non di pura vittima,
Ma là soper' Arno nela vostra Etruria,
Sto soggiogata alla teda legitima.
Mia natal patria è nell' aspra Liguria,
Soper una costa alla riva maritima,
Ove fuor de gran massi indarno gemere,
Si sente il fier Nettuno, e irato fremere."

(*b*) "Aveva Cosimo dei Medici veggendo le ricchezze e nobilità di costoro la Bianca sua nipote con Guglielmo congiunta; sperando che quel parentado facesse queste famiglie più unite, e levasse via l' inimicizie e gli odi, che dal sospetto il più delle volte sogliono nascere. Nondimeno: tanto sono i disegni nostri incerti e fallaci! la cosa procedette altrimenti." *Machiavelli, tom.* 1. *lib*, 8. 395.

Bianca's exertions in his favour. After the revolution of 1494, he returned from exile, and was appointed Governor of Arezzo by the Florentine Republic.—In the subsequent revolution of 1502, he was again in danger from the partisans of the House of Medici; and on the revolt of the city, he owed a second time his safety to conjugal affection and fidelity.

The ancient Florentine Chronicles speak of the family of the Pazzi, originally of the same extraction, as divided into two branches, the Pazzi of Florence, and the Pazzi of Valdarno.—The latter were the most powerful nobles of Tuscany.

Giacopo de' Pazzi.

In 1260 the wound of a Giacopo Pazzi occasioned the defeat of the Florentine troops at Montuperti, one of the most signal disasters in the Florentine annals. A traitor having cut in pieces the right-hand of Giacopo, who was a standard-bearer in the Florentine "Gendarmerie," the whole army was seized with a panic, and the terrible defeat followed by which Florence was in imminent danger of being ruined without resource.

Camiscione de' Pazzi.

What treason Camiscione de' Pazzi had been guilty of is not known, but Dante discovers him in his Inferno—

"Là dove i peccatori stanno freschi (*c*),"

in

(*c*) *Dante dell' Inferno, Canto.* 32. 117.

in his visionary frozen sea, the miserable abode of traitors and the most abandoned characters (*d*).

Gulielmo de' Pazzi of Valdarno.

Gulielmo de' Pazzi, of Valdarno, the Chief of the Ghibelines of Arezzo, fell in an engagement at Certomondo, where they were defeated by the Guelphs of Florence. Villani represents him as one of the greatest and most experienced officers of his time, and he has given the following extraordinary narrative respecting the action :— " The news of his defeat and death was known at the " very instant that it happened, for the Magistrates and " Priori having passed the whole of the preceding night " in council, had retired after dinner to repose them- " selves, when a violent knocking was heard at their " chamber-door, and a loud voice, desiring them to rise, " informed

(*d*) " Ed un, ch'avea perduti ambo gli orecchi,
Per la freddura, pur col viso in giùe
Disse; perchè cotanto in noi ti specchi?
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
E perchè non mi metti in più sermoni,
Sappi ch'i' fu' il Camicion de' Pazzi."
Dante dell' Inferno, Canto 32. 52—68.

" A third, with ears retrench'd, beheld their rage,
And cry'd, ' Why gaze ye thus with fell delight
On others pain ?
. . . .
And tell (if yet my name ye wish to know,)
Trivigna's Lord, that Pazze waits below.' "
Boyd's Dante, vol. 2. 320—322.

"informed them the Aretines were defeated. The Pri-"ori went immediately in a hurry to open the door, but "could neither see nor hear of any person being there, "and on inquiry of their attendants they were wholly "ignorant of what had happened. This was reckoned a "great miracle, as the courier did not arrive with the re-"gular account till night (*e*)." Villani adds, "I give "this for a true and undoubted fact, for I was present, "and both saw and heard it (*f*)." The veracity of Villani is too well established for his evidence to be doubted or disputed, yet, without the idea of a supernatural agency, the circumstance may be perhaps explained on common principles.—There is scarcely a person who has not experienced, some time in his life, to what a point agitation, continued watching, and wine, will affect the spirits, and influence the understanding.

Cosmo de' Pazzi.

Cosmo de' Pazzi was the issue of the marriage between Gulielmo

(*e*) "La Novella della detta vittoria fu in Firenze, in quella hora medesima che le fue, in questo modo, che dopo il mangiare, essendo i signiori Priori a dormire, et posare per sollicitudine et grande veghiare e haveano fatto la notte passata, subitamente fu percosso l' uscio della camera de detti Priori con gridare levate su, che gli Aretini sono sconfitti, et levati i Priori, et aperto l' uscio della loro camera, non trovarono ne vidono persona, et etiando i loro famigliari non haveano di questo veduto ne sentito nulla, onde fu grande et notabile maraviglia tenuta, pero che anzi che persona venisse de l' hoste con le novelle fu ad hora di vespro, et questo fu di meriggio anzi nona."

Giovanni Villani, Hist. Universal de suoi tempi. lib. 7. 244. 4*to. Venet.* 1559.

(*f*) "Cio fu il vero, peroche io scrittore udi, senti et vidi queste cose." *Villani, lib.* 7. 244.

Gulielmo de' Pazzi and Bianca de' Medici. He distinguished himself by his learning, and died Archbishop of Florence in 1513. An old Florentine Chronicle leaves us in doubt of his disorder; some, it observes, supposed him to have died of a pulmonary complaint, and others from his chagrin at the prosperity of the House of Medici (*g*).—The terrible catastrophe of 1477 naturally increased the family aversion.

Alessandro de' Pazzi.

Alessandro de' Pazzi, Cosmo's brother, exposed himself by some miserable tragedies he had servilely taken from the Grecian Poets (*h*). Titian has finely represented the false taste of these wretched copyists, in his print of the overgrown baboon, with two little apes, in the attitudes of the Laocoon and his two sons, which are as ridiculous as can be conceived. To counterfeit the ancients is absurd.—They may be imitated; and tragedies should be written as Sophocles would at present write.—Racine and Voltaire had no other secret.

Rafaello de' Pazzi.

A third brother of the Pazzi had the name of Rafaello, and was allowed by Guicciardini to be a "Condottiere di "chiaro

(*g*) "Dissero alcuni essere stato il suo mal di petto, altri dolore della grandezza de' Medici."

(*h*) "Alexandri Paccii fabulæ ab Etruscis histrionibus repudiabantur, qui exsibilantis populi judicium maxima instar periculi fugiendum existimabant."
Paul. Iov.

"chiaro nome (*i*)," or a general of great reputation. Since the days of the Romans Italy had not been witness to such a battle as that of Ravenna, where the French impetuosity was opposed to Spanish firmness, and the brave encountered the brave!—Exclusive of Gaston de Foix, the French, who were successful, lost many men of eminence; but the only person of distinction slain on the side of the Confederates was Rafaello de' Pazzi, who commanded a body of the Italian troops.

Alfonso de' Pazzi.

The Florentines amuse themselves with the sonnets of Alfonzo de' Pazzi, directed principally against Benedetto Varchi, one of their most celebrated Litterati.

It is not generally known that another of the Pazzi family, a Knight of Malta, at the end of the sixteenth century was suspected of a conspiracy against the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and in consequence of it was obliged to quit his country, with the forfeiture of all his fortune. —In his distress he went afterwards into service as a groom (*k*).

This family, productive of great men and great criminals, gave birth likewise to a female Saint, in the person of

(*i*) *Guicciardini. lib.* 10. 304.

(*k*) "Antonius Paccius, eques Hierosolymitanus, quum insimularetur contra Franciscum, magnum Etruriæ Ducem, conjurasse, omnium rerum egens, Mantuæ ignotus equos viri cujusdam nobilis, mercede curavit." *J. Nicius Erythræus.*

of Maria Madalena de' Pazzi, who died in 1607, and was canonized towards the end of the century. We have a bulky collection of her works, and amongst them a most indecent parallel between the Holy Virgin and the Cross. Her pious reveries are sometimes blasphemies, but indeed nothing is more reprehensible than the Ascetic writings of the times, where devotion appears in a garb that completely exposes it to the scoffs of the libertine, and the taunts of the infidel. The tender heart of our female saint "swam in the ocean of pure love, as the "fishes in the sea," and few of her sex had such singular, or such frequent religious extravagancies. Being one day absorbed in meditation, she heard a grating at her cell, and discovered St. Augustin, who was arrived from the celestial world to pay her a visit. Inflamed with spiritual love all coy resistance was at an end, and throwing herself on an adjoining bench, and opening her bosom, she shewed her panting heart to the holy visitant, and modestly requested he would write upon it "The WORD was "made Flesh."—"THE PEN," she observed, "WAS REA-"DY," and in an amorous ecstasy she entered into the most profane and lascivious ejaculations (*l*).—Her biographer adds, the WORD was written in golden letters, and the "Caro factum est" in those of silver on her heart. From

(*l*) "O Amour que ton immensité mérite de louanges! O Amour, O Amour, si vous voulez être aimé donnez vous même! ——— Eh non, non, ce n'est pas-là le genre de mort, dont souhaite mourir l'amante d'un Dieu crucifié. ——— Seigneur vos plaisirs sont trop excessifs!" As these raptures were excessive they were

CHAP. VI. From this specimen of the saint's history, as well as from a thousand other anecdotes of a similar import in her life, we may form a tolerable judgment of her character.

The Chapel of the Pazzi in a Church at Florence is the work of Brunelleschi.—The Florentine family is still subsisting, and the Chevalier J. Geronimo de' Pazzi established, in the year 1732, a little literary society called the "Societa Columbaria," which published for several years its very interesting Memoirs (*m*).

Giovanna

short, and the exhausted female turning to her Spiritual lover, added, "Vous avez imprimé la grandeur du Verbe sur la petitesse de mon cœur, et je vous en remercie."—A modern author has described with admirable humour a Vision of the same kind:

"Blessed I, tho' once rejected,
Like a little wand'ring sheep,
Who this morning was elected
By a vision in my sleep.

. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .

Faith her chariot has appointed,
Now we're stretching for the goal;
All the wheels with grease anointed,
Up to Heav'n to drive my soul."

And he adds, that "if the reader will please to look into the Bishop of Exeter's book, intitled, "The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared," he will find many instances, (particularly of young people) who have been elected in this manner."

(*m*) *Bandini, Spec. Lit. Flor.*

Bernardo Rucellai.

Giovanna de' Medici, the youngest sister of Lorenzo, Giuliano, and Bianca, married Bernardo Rucellai, a noble and illustrious Florentine citizen, and a respectable historian and poet. He left carnival songs, poetical enough, but rather too licentious, a History of the War with Pisa, and a History of Florence, written with great eloquence and purity. On the death of his immortal brother-in-law, the Platonic Academy was removed to his Gardens, and Crinitus, Machiavel, and other learned authors, often speak of their philosophical conferences. As they treated also of the Italian language, and the best methods of preserving it from corruption, this little society was the origin of the Florentine Academy of Belles Lettres. After the death of Charles the VIIIth of France, Bernardo Rucellai was sent as ambassador to Venice, to engage that republic to withdraw its protection from the city of Pisa, which had thrown off the Florentine dominion when the French Monarch passed through it. Erasmus here met Rucellai, though he does not seem to have reaped much instruction from him. "I knew Bernardo "Rucellai," he remarks, "at Venice, a Florentine citizen, "whose histories in point of style were worthy of Sallust, "or certainly some of his cotemporaries, but I could ne"ver prevail on him to speak Latin to me. I told him "he might as well attempt to speak to a deaf person as "in Italian, of which I knew no more than of the Chi"nese, and I could not still get a word from him (*a*)."—
Rucellai's

(*a*) "Novi Venetiæ Bernardum Oricularium, civem Florentinum, cujus historias

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Rucellai's fear of embarrassment was notwithstanding ill-founded; for Erasmus, who spoke Latin very fluently, was not solicitous respecting its chastity; and his Ciceronianus, which is indeed no longer read, as it turns upon a species of folly that has at present no existence, is a full proof of the observation.

Bernardo Rucellai had three sons by Giovanna de' Medici, Cosmo, Giovanni, and Palla.

Cosmo Rucellai.

Cosmo, on the French invasion in 1494, betrayed the interests of the Medici family. He was, however, a person of letters, and left a son of his name, which was afterwards changed for that of Cosimino, to distinguish him from his father and his paternal grandfather. Cosimino died in the spring of life (*b*), and the Florentine historian dedicated to him his Discourses on Titus Livy, and also introduced him into one of his Dialogues on the Art of War, in which there is a fine elogium of Cosimino, and his ardent thirst of glory (*c*). Perhaps the youthful mind

si legisses, dixisses alterum Salustium, aut certè Salustii temporibus scriptas. Nunquam tamen ab homine impetrare licuit ut mecum latinè loqueretur; subinde interpellabam; Surdo loqueris, vir præclare; vulgaris linguæ vestratis tam sum ignarus quam Indicæ: verbum latinum nunquam ab eo quivi extundere."

(*b*) "Essendo Cosimino morto nè suoi più verdi anni, fecero la città di Firenze, e le Muse Toscane danno e perdita inestimabile." *Bened. Varchi.*

(*c*) Perchè io credo che si possa lodare dopo la morte ogni uomo senza carico, sendo mancata ogni cagione e sospetto di adulazione, non dubiterò di lodare Cosimo Rucellaï nostro; il nome del quale non fia mai ricordato da me senza lacrime, aven-

mind is not in our days sufficiently stimulated, and even that noble emulation is rather discouraged, without which nothing very great or splendid can be achieved (*d*).—If genius, which may not be as rare as it is supposed, were absolutely to decide between the acquisition of transcendent glory and profound contempt, we should in

do conosciute in lui quelle parti, lequali in uno buono amico dagli amici, in uno cittadino della sua patria si possono desiderare. Perchè io non so quale cosa si fusse tanto sua, non eccettuando, non ch'altro, l'anima, che per gli amici volontieri da lui non fusse stata spesa; non so quale impresa l'avesse sbigottito, dove quello avesse conosciuto il bene della sua patria. E io confesso liberamente, non avere riscontro tra tanti uomini che io ho conosciuti e pratichi, uomo nel quale fusse il più acceso animo alle cose grandi e magnifiche. Nè si dolse con gli amici d'altro nella sua morte, sennon d'essere nato per morire giovane dentro alle sue case, e inonorato, senza avere potuto secondo l'animo suo giovare ad alcuno; perchè sapeva che di lui non si poteva dire altro, sennon che fusse morto uno buono amico. Non resta però per questo che noi e qualunque altro, che come noi lo conosceva, non possiamo far fede (poichè l'opere non appariscono) delle sue lodevoli qualità. Vero è che non gli fù però fortuna tanta nemica, che nou lasciasse alcun breve ricordo della destrezza d'el suo ingegno, come ne dimonstrano alcuni suoi scritti, e composizioni d'amorosi versi, ne quali (comechè inamorato non fusse) per non consumare il tempo in vano, tanto che a più alti pensieri la fortuna l'avesse condotto, nella sua giovenile età si esercitava. Dove chiaramente si può comprendere, con quanta felicità i suoi concetti descrivesse, e quanto nella poëtica si fusse avanzato, se quella per suo fine fusse da lui stata esercitata, &c. &c." *Machiav. tom.* 2. 183.

(*d*) Voltaire has beautifully observed in the character of Cicero, in his "Rome Sauvee,"

"Romains, j'aime la gloire et ne veux point m'en tair,
Des travaux des Humains, c'est le digne salaire."

He often took this character in the representation of the tragedy, on his own private stage at Fernay, and he both felt the sentiment and spoke the passage with enthusiasm.—The classical Reader can be no stranger to the "Contemptu Famæ contemni Virtutes" of the philosophical historian.

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in all probability soon see the greatest efforts crowned with the greatest success.—Esteem and respect are the middle stations between these two extremes, to which the access is easy; we stop frequently when we have reached them, and indolence applauds us on our choice.

Giovanni Rucellai.

Giovanni Rucellai, the uncle of Cosimino, and friend of two Popes of the House of Medici, is in possession of a distinguished rank amongst the Italian poets. Of great taste, and stored with Grecian learning, he was a public favourite, and his tragedies had a most brilliant success in their representation. His Orestes and Rosmonda alternately inflamed the learned Court of Leo the Xth with rage, and softened it into tears. Yet at present they have but a feeble effect, and are not read from pleasure but curiosity (*e*). The latter was indeed ill chosen or adapted for the stage, where excess, as well as in every other instance, counteracts the end it was intended to produce. Rosmonda was the unfortunate Princess that the King of the Huns forced to accept of his hand, stained with her father's blood, and to drink, in his carousals, out of her father's skull.—Such a spectacle, instead of that voluptuous sorrow which to a feeling mind is sometimes preferable to the wildest delirium of joy, must have been horrid and disgusting (*f*)!—Passionate and impetuous affections

Tragedies of Orestes and Rosmonda.

(*e*) Of the Rosmonda there have been two London editions, and the last, in 1779, Bartolozzi has ornamented with a frontispiece.

(*f*) "Rucellai, however," Mr. Roscoe remarks, "preserved his heroine from

fections may give life and animation to the Tragic Muse, but the cool and determined villain that, under the mask of virtue, with caution and duplicity lays his plan to gratify his malice and revenge by the destruction of integrity and innocence, must be insupportable.—It was from Paulus Diaconius, the historian of the Lombards, that Rucellai borrowed his Rosmonda, and he shewed at least some sense in his preference of it to a history more frightful and more horrid in the same author. A formidable body of the Huns had made an irruption on the Venetian frontiers, and the brave Gisulphus, Duke of Friuli, assembled a handful of Lombards to defend himself.—Numbers prevailed, and he was massacred with the greatest part of his troops.—Romilda, his widow, at first wished to save her country.—She gathered the remains of the little band, that had escaped the swords of the Huns, within the town of Friuli, and shut herself up along with them and her family within its walls. To appearance she was determined to defend it to the last extremity, when one of those events that are oftener met with in fable and romance than in history, produced an entire change in her intentions.—The King of the Huns had reconnoitred the town in person, and traversed the whole circuit

the crimes of prostitution and assassination, and has introduced a disinterested lover in the person of Almachilde, who executes vengeance on the King from generous and patriotic motives. In justice to the author it must also be observed, that the horrid incident upon which the tragedy is founded is narrated only, and not represented before the audience." *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, vol.* 2. 169.

circuit of its walls at the head of a numerous body of cavalry, whilst the rest of its territories was a prey to pillage and flames. Romilda gazed with too much pleasure upon her enemy; his youth, his beauty, and his dexterity and grace in the management of his steed and arms made an unfortunate impression on her, and she forgot, in a single unguarded moment, her duty to the manes of her slaughtered husband—to her children—her country and herself.——She sent a proposal of marriage to the King of the Huns, with an offer of delivering as a dower, the town, its inhabitants, and every thing it contained.—The Cagan, though he despised the traitress, determined to profit by the treachery, and as soon as he was in possession of the town and fortress, he was as flagitious as Romilda.—At first, pretending to adhere to his engagement, he passed the night with her, to consummate their promised union. When the morning dawned, the satiated and cruel lover became again the Barbarian.—The succeeding night Romilda was delivered up to the brutal lust of twelve Avars, and they had orders to violate her with every species of indignity and infamy.—On the following morning a tree was planted, and the wretched victim was impaled upon it, with the insulting sarcasm that such was the husband she deserved (*g*).

If

(*g*) "Propter jusjurandum, sicut ei spoponderat, nocte unâ quasi in matrimonio habuit, novissimè vero duodecim Avaribus tradidit, qui eam per totam noctem vicibus sibi succedentes libidine vexarent. Postmodum quoque palum in medio campo

Poem of the Bees.

If Rucellai's Tragedies had only a temporary success, his beautiful poem of "Le Api" or the Bees, has insured him a lasting reputation. Though Virgil had already handled the subject, Rucellai undertook it, and after the example of his friend Trissino, he had the boldness to indulge himself in the easy freedom of blank verse (*h*). Both the measure and poem met with great success, and notwithstanding the latter might have more life and vigour, it could not be more chaste or pure.

Every Reader of sensibility and taste, as he takes a solitary walk, will be delighted with this poem,

"Ed odi quel che sopra un verde prato
Cinto d' abeti e d' onorati allori,
Che bagna or un muscoso e chiaro fonte
Canta de l' Api del suo florid' orto."

Rucellai, however, adopts the Latin poet's errors, from

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configi præcipiens, eandem in ejus acumine inseri mandavit, hæc insuper exprobrando, inquiens, TALEM TE DIGNUM EST MARITUM HABERE."
Paul. Warnefrid, de Gestis Longobardorum. lib. 4. *c.* 38. 42.
The History may be found also in *Muratori. Annali d' Italia. tom.* 5. 305.

(*h*) "Fuggi le rime e'l rimbombar sonoro;
Tu sai pur, che l' imagin della voce,
Che risponde da i sassi, ov' Echo alberga,
Sempre nemica fù del nostro regno,
E fù inventrice delle prime rime."
L' Api, del Ruccellai.

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from which we may conclude the History of Insects was then as little known in Italy, as in the Augustan age. Swammerdam, Maraldi, Reaumur, Schirach, and many other natural philosophers have since made a great number of curious discoveries, and a poem might now be written on the Bee, that would not either resemble Virgil or Rucellai.

Clement the VIIth honoured Giovanni Rucellai with the important and slippery office (*i*) of Keeper of the Castle of St. Angelo, which has been almost a certain passport to the Purple (*k*). Yet affection or friendship had no influence upon Clement the VIIth; interest was the prevailing motive which governed him in every action of his life, and he suffered his cousin to die without having bestowed on him the honour he had both pretensions to and expected.

Palla Rucellai.

The third brother Palla was that fierce champion for Republicanism, who opposed in 1537, with such spirit and with such little success, the election of the first Grand Duke of Florence, and after having passed one part of his life under the yoke of the Medici died still reluctantly

(*i*) "Carica gelosissima." *Padre Negri.*

(*k*) "Quem Pontifices præfecturâ Molis Hadrianeæ honestant, nullâ mox controversiâ in Cardinalem, ubi adlibuit, adsciscunt; quod vix unquam, nisi Pontificis interveniente obitu, fallere visum est." *Valerian. de Infelic. Litteratorum.*

luctantly under its subjection. His sons, Cosmo, Bernardo, Clement, and Annibale, are reckoned by P. Victorius amongst his favourite scholars, and he calls them his delights, "Delicias nostras Oricellarios fratres."—Annibale, the secretary of the Pope Caraffi, Paul the IVth, was sent to Henry the IId of France, to engage him in a treaty, and he was the editor of the works of his maternal uncle the celebrated poet, and archbishop Giovanni della Casa.

Orazio Ruccellai, a grandson of Palla , less scrupulous than his ancestor, was honoured with the office of Master of the Household to the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinand the Ist, who confided to him some important embassies to Vienna, Warsaw, and Paris.

In 1588 he went into France to negotiate the marriage of the Grand Duke with Christina of Lorraine, whose disgrace he incurred a few years afterwards, and by that means lost his place in the Duke's household and his interest with him. The Cardinal d'Ossat describes him as one of the ablest men of his age, and Crescimbeni allows him to have been a "leggiadro poëta e profondo filosofo."—Whatever might have been his poetical talents, his philosophical pursuits had not extinguished in him his rage for wealth, which appears by many disgraceful circumstances in his odious correspondence with Zamet, Bandini, Cenami, Sardini, and other persons of their

CHAP. VI. their character, who plundered with the most profound address both their own country and France.—The following passage is in the journal of "l' Etoile."

"Ce jourd'hui premier Août 1581, fut plaidée au Privé Conseil la cause d'entre le Duc de Nivernois et les habitans du dit pays, contre Ruscellaï, fermier des impôts de Sel. Fut Marion, avocat plaidant pour le dit Duc et pays de Nivernois, blamé d'avoir trop librement parlé contre les nouvelles daces et impôts, en présence du Roi et au Roi même (Henri III.) de façon que Sa Majesté, trouvant ces propos fort mauvais et piquans, le chassa en colére de devant lui, et même le vouloit envoyer à la bastille. Ne le put-on jamais tant adoucir, qu'il ne suspendît le dit Marion de toute postulation pour un an: mais cette suspension animeuse fut le lendemain levée, demeurant Ruscellaï rudement baffoué et injurié par le dit Marion, qui en présence de son Conseil l'avoit fort mal mené."

This Marion, in the opinion of Cardinal du Perron, was the only advocate since the days of Cicero worth attention, but if we are to form ours from the fifteen pleadings he has left, the Cardinal either grossly flattered him, or was no judge of oratory.—Marion, Vair, and Versoris had the secret, perhaps, of speaking so as to be listened to, but they are no longer to be read.

Of Annibale's numerous family the Abbé Ruccellai made the principal figure by his conduct in France during the minority of Lewis the XIIIth. He had attached himself to the queen mother after the death of the insolent Concini and the crafty Galigai, and he was for some time the director of all her movements. His negotiation in her favour with the Duke d' Epernon, of which there is an ample detail in the Duke's life, is a little compendium of political address. The famous Bishop of Luçon, afterwards Cardinal Richelieu, gradually undermined his power, and out of chagrin he threw himself into the arms of the Constable de Luynes with whom he was a great favourite. He died in 1622. The Marshal Bassompierre, who speaks often of him, says "Il avait pour "amis les ministres et tous nous autres." Yet distinguished as the Abbé was in this tempestuous court by his abilities and political intrigues, he was still more so by his profusion, a sort of Epicurean indolence, and the last refinement of voluptuous luxury.

The philosophical dialogues of another Ruccellai, the Prior of Malta, are yet read and esteemed in his own country, and Florence possesses at present a senator of the name, who has been the author of some excellent treatises, two pleasant comedies, and other works of learning.—Ye, who cherish and cultivate the arts and sciences, speak with reverence of the family!—The mother of Michelagnolo was a Ruccellai!

History

History does not, perhaps, furnish a more striking instance of the blindness of paternal affection, than in Lorenzo's partiality for Piero de' Medici his eldest son. We learn from Politiano, that about two months before Lorenzo's death, as Marsilio Ficino, Pico de Mirandula, and Politiano were conversing with him on philosophical and literary subjects, he informed them his state of health made him think of a retreat from the toil of public business, and that he purposed to quit the government, and pass the remainder of his days in the country in philosophical ease and study.—Politiano replied, that he was every day more and more necessary to his fellow-citizens, who would not be satisfied without him.—Lorenzo with a smile told him he should throw the weight of government on his pupil; and on Politiano's asking, if he supposed the shoulders of so young a person to be capable of sustaining such a burthen, Lorenzo added, that from the strength and solidity of the foundation, he could venture to build upon it, and that notwithstanding the Medici family had produced a number of great men, if he was not egregiously deceived by the specimens Piero had already given him of his talents, he both hoped and prophesied he would not be inferior to any of his ancestors (*a*).—Politiano, however, must have been guilty of

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(*a*) "Duobus circiter ante obitum mensibus, cum in suo cubiculo sedens (ut solebat) Laurentius, de Philosophia, et literis nobiscum fabularetur, ac se destinasse diceret reliquam ætatem in iis studiis mecum, et cum Ficino, Picoque ipse Mirandula consumere, procul scilicet ab urbe, et strepitu; negabam equidem hoc ei per suos

of extravagant flattery, if Guicciardini's evidence is to be believed, which directly contradicts Politiano. "Piero was even from his childhood detested by his fellow-citizens, and his father with tears in his eyes often predicted to his confidential friends, that his arrogance and temerity would be the ruin of the family (*b*)."

Piero de' Medici succeeds Lorenzo.

Piero de' Medici, in taking the reins of government into his hands, weakly imagined that the force and vigour which the wise magnanimity of his predecessors had introduced into it, were common and ordinary qualities that would continue without any care and attention on his part, and this dangerous and fatal error ruined him.—The machine was too complicate to work without some assisting power, and Piero's want of knowledge and deficiency in address entirely deranged it.—If he occupied the station of his ancestors, he was far from filling it.

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civei licere, qui quidem indies viderentur magis, magisque ipsius et consilium, et authoritatem desideraturi. Tum subridens ille, Atqui jam, inquit, vices nostras alumno tuo delegabimus, atque in eum sarcinam hanc, et onus omne, reclinabimus. Cumque eo rogassem, an adhuc in adulescente, tantum virium deprehendisset, ut eis bona fide incumbere jam possemus. Ego vero, ait ille, quanta ejus et quam solida video esse fundamenta, laturum spero haud dubie quicquid inædificavero. Cave igitur putes, Angele, quenquam adhuc ex nostris, indole fuisse tanta, quantam jam Petrus ostendit, ut sperem fore, atque adeo augurer (nisi me ipsius ingenii aliquot jam experimenta fefellerint) ne cui sit majorum suorum concessurus."

(*b*) "Quasi insino da pueritia era stato sempre odioso alla universalità de' cittadini, et in modo che è certissimo, che il padre Lorenzo, contemplando la sua natura, si era spesso lamentato con gli amici più intimi, che l'imprudentia, et arrogantia del figlinolo partorirebbe la rovina della sua casa." *La Historia d' Italia di Guicciardini, lib.* 1. 28. *4to. Venet.* 1623.

it.—Lorenzo, during the last eight years of his life, had nothing more at heart than to strengthen the league that he had concluded, by which the peace of Italy had been secured. The task indeed was not without its difficulty, and it required all his dexterity to preserve the good understanding between the King of Naples and Lodovico Sforza, the guardian of the Duke of Milan, who feared and hated each other.—Lorenzo was the mediator (*c*) between these sullen spirits, and had kept them united almost in spite of their inclinations.—Piero neglected this important duty, by which the equilibrium and peace of Italy were alone to be secured, and entering indiscreetly with his whole confidence into the measures of the Arragon, Sforza was soon aware of it, and lost not a moment in the change of his political system.

On the death of Innocent the VIIIth, the choice of the Conclave fell on that monstrous assemblage of all vices known under the name of Alexander the VIth, the most unprincipled and profligate character (*d*) the world has

(*c*) "Era mezzo a moderare, et quasi un freno ne' dispareri et ne' sospetti, i quali per diverse cagioni tri Ferdinando, et Lodovico Sforza, principi d'ambitione, et di potentia quasi pari, spesse volte nascevano." *Guicciardini, lib.* 1. 2. *4to. Venet.* 1623.

(*d*) The character of this Pontiff has been drawn in a few words by the masterly hand of Guicciardini. "In Alessandro VI. fu solertia, et sagacità singulare, consiglio eccellente, efficacia a persuadere maravigliosa, et a tutte le facende gravi, sollecitudine, e destrezza incredibile. Ma erano queste virtù avanzate di grande intervallo da' vitii: costumi osceni̇ssimi, non sincerità, non vergogna, non verità,

has ever yet seen, if that of his bastard son is not still more infamous. Milan, Naples, and Florence, in order to give more pomp and dignity to their interests and union, determined to send their respective envoys in a body to take the oaths of spiritual obedience to the See of Rome.—Piero de' Medici was at the head of the Florentine deputies, and though he was fearful of openly opposing the agreement between the three Powers, seeing himself merely joined with the other envoys, his vanity was greatly mortified, and he endeavoured secretly to put an end to the convention. With this view he applied to his friend Ferdinand, and begged he would under some pretence or other propose to Lodovico Sforza an alteration in the agreement. Ferdinand complied with the request, but at the same time he took care to apprize Sforza of the quarter from which the wish originated. This trifling incident was not lost on Sforza, who perceived at once the secret and intimate connection (*e*) between

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non fede, non religione, avaritia insatiabile, ambitione immoderata, crudelità più che barbara." *Guicciardini, lib.* 1. 3.

(*e*) " Dovendosi secondo la consuetudine inveterata di tutta la Christianità mandare Ambasciatori ad adorare come Vicario di Christo in terra, et ad offerire d'ubbidire il nuovo Pontefice; haveva Lodovico Sforza, del quale fù proprio ingegnarsi di parere con inventioni non pensate da altri superiori di prudentia a ciascuno, consigliato, che tutti gli Ambasciatori de' collegati, entrassero in un di medesimo insieme in Roma, presentassinsi tutti insieme nel Concistorio pubblico innanzi al Pontefice, et che uno di essi orasse in nome comune: perche da questo con grandissimo accrescimento della riputatione di tutti, a tutta Italia si dimostrerebbe essere tra loro non solo benivolentia, et confederatione, ma più tosto tanta congiuntione che e' paressero quasi un Principe, et un corpo medesimo. ——— Approvò facilmente

tween his two allies, which of all other things was that he most dreaded, as it completely destroyed all his future projects.

Louis the XIth of France had been summoned to an account for his baseness and his crimes, and to join Tiberius in the regions of the dead, with whose character his had a strong resemblance.—He had left his crown to Charles the VIIIth, a youth of very limited abilities, but who had unfortunately heard of Alexander the Great, and been informed of the rights of the House of Anjou to the king-

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Ferdinando il parere di Lodovico: approvaronlo per l' autorità dell' uno, et dell' altro i Fiorentini, non contradicendo ne' consigli publici Piero de' Medici, benche privatamente gli fosse molestissimo; perche essendo egli uno de gli Oratori eletti in nome della Republica, et havendo deliberato di fare illustre la sua legatione con apparato molto superbo, et quasi Regio; si accorgeva che entrando in Roma, et presentandosi al Pontefice insieme con gli altri Ambasciatori de' Collegati, non poteva in tanta moltitudine apparire a gli occhi de gli huomini lo splendore della sua pompa. ————Piero stimolato, parte dalla leggierezza propria, parte dall'ambitione d'altri ma non volendo, che a notitia di Lod. Sforza pervenisse, che da sè si contradicesse al consiglio pro posto da lui richiese il Re, che dimostrando d'havere dapoi considerato che senza molta confusione non si potrebbono esequire questi atti comunemente, confortasse che ciascuno seguitando gli essenpi passati procedesse da se medesimo: nella quale domanda il Rè desideroso di conpiacergli, ma non tanto che totalmente dispiacesse a Lodovico; gli satisfece più dell' effetto che del modo; conciosia cosa che è non celò, che non per altra cagione si partiva da quel che prima haveva consentito, che per l'instantia fattagli da Piero de' Medici. Dimostrò di questa subita variatione maggior molestia Lodovico, che per se stessa non meritava l'importantia della cosa, lamentandosi gravemente ch'essendo già nota al Pontefice, et a tutta la corte di Roma, la prima deliberatione, e chi ne fosse stato autore; hora studiosamente si ritrattasse per diminuire la sua riputatione; ma gli dispiacque molto più che per questo minimo, et quasi non considerabile accidente, cominciò a comprendere, che Piero de' Medici havesse occultamente intelligentia con Ferdinando."

Guicciardini, lib. 1. 3, 4.

kingdom of Naples. He determined to dispossess the Arragon of the throne he occupied, though he must have been foiled at the outset of his undertaking if he had not been supported by some Italian succours.—Lodovico Sforza had no scruples of making use of the dangerous instrument to strengthen his own usurpation, the success of which depended on the ruin of the Princes who were the relations and protectors of his ward. By his means, therefore, the French King's route was opened into Italy, though he wished him only a temporary success, and with all the duplicity and wiles of the most crafty politician, both meditated his destruction and prepared for him the snare which he concealed with flowers.—Piero de' Medici, who had attached himself to the King of Naples, conceived the best method of stopping the progress of the French forces would be to sow divisions between Charles the VIIIth and Sforza, and he took an early opportunity of revealing Sforza's perfidy. He sent for the French envoy at Florence, and concealing him behind a screen of tapestry, soon afterwards admitted Sforza's minister to an audience by appointment. He entered into a minute conversation with him on the situation of affairs; they travelled through all the secret designs of Sforza, and enlarged upon his apprehensions that the French monarch, if he succeeded in his views on Naples, would revive the old dormant claims of Valentina Visconti, his great grand-father's sister, on Milan, and Sforza's promises of leaving nothing undone to force Charles to repass

repass the Alpes, or to destroy him, were not forgotten. Piero de' Medici affected to complain of the slowness of Sforza's proceedings, and the Milanese minister renewed with so much earnestness his master's engagements as to leave no doubt whatever of his treachery (*a*).—The French envoy made a report of the conversation, and the monarch, acting on the most interested system, as Lodovico's assistance was then absolutely necessary for him, he contented himself with being on his guard till he had those open and positive proofs of his perfidy that could neither be disputed or denied.

Charles the VIIIth having requested a free passage for his troops from the Florentines, obtained from Piero de' Medici only vague and ambiguous answers, which shocked him more, as the Florentine ministers at Paris, who

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(*a*) "Deliberato adunque Piero con saputa d'Alfonso di fare notto questo andamento al Re di Franchia, chiamò un dì a casa sua, sotto colore d'essere indisposto della persona; l'ambasciatore Milanese, havendo prima ascoso quello del Re, che era in Firenze, in luogo, donde commodamente i ragionamenti loro udire potesse, quivi Piero repetite con parole distese le persuasioni, et le promesse di Lodovico, et che per l'autorità sua era stato pertinace a non consentire alle dimande di Carlo; si lamentò gravemente, che egli con tanta instantia sollecitasse la sua passata, conchiudendo, che poi che i fatti non corrispondevano alle parole, era necessitato a risoluersi di non si ristignere in tanta pericolo. Rispondeva il Milanese non dovere Piero dubitare della fede il Lodovico, se non per altro, perche almeno era similmente a lui pernitiso, che Carlo pigliasse Napoli, confortandolo efficacemente a perseverare nella medesima sentenza, perche partendosene sarebbe cagione di ridure se stesso, et Italia tutta in servitù. Delquale ragionamento l'Oratore Francese dette subita notitia al suo Re, affermando, che era tradito da Lodovico."

Guicciardini, lib. 1. 22.

who were secretly enemies to the House of Medici, added fuel to the flames, and to borrow an expression from Comines, "faisoyent leur charge plus aigre qu'elle n'é-"toit."—Piero's conduct was highly inconsiderate.—He swam alone against an impetuous and overpowering torrent, and the inclinations of the whole mass of his fellow-citizens, for the House of Anjou were notorious and decided. Dissatisfied with the authority he had inherited from his ancestors, he was suspected of a desire of aspiring to the title of Prince, and of having entered so very warmly into Ferdinand's interest, in order to have received his support in the acquisition of his wishes.—His best friends stated their fears to him.—They represented to him in strong terms, that the Arragons were not to be depended on—that at the first check they would abandon him, and leave him exposed to the hatred and resentment of a powerful monarch—that he would occasion by his measures the ruin of his family—and that he would inevitably involve the Florentines in such a train of misfortunes as would render his memory for ever odious.—In a word, they conjured him to reflect on what he owed to himself, to his family, and to his country.—All these serious remonstrances were in vain.—They made no impression on his obstinacy, but that obstinacy cost him dear. *His ruinous conduct.*

Charles having turned his arms towards Tuscany, sat down before several of the Florentine fortresses, and besieged them. A scarcity of provisions soon embarrassed

 him,

him, and he might have been involved in difficulties from which an active enemy might have derived the most favourable consequences (*b*).—Piero de' Medici saved him.—Full of confidence and vanity when danger was at a distance, as it approached him he lost his understanding, and at the very first breath of ill fortune he was in despair (*c*)!—As the enemy advanced the Florentines became more indignant and incensed at Piero's conduct, who had with so little concern exposed them to such perils, without having provided for their defence.—He had not taken a single step for their security, in order that he might not admit they were in any danger (*d*).—The Arragons abandoned their faithful ally without hesitation, the disaffected fomented

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(*b*) "Facevano i Fiorentini la resistenza principale in Serezana piccola Città, stata da loro molto fortificata, ma non l'havevano proveduta contra nimico sì potente, come sarebbe stato necessario, per che non u'havevano messo Capitano di guerra d'autorità, nè molti soldati, et quei già ripieni di viltà per la fama sola dell' approssimarsi l'esercito Francese, et nondimeno non si riputava di facile espugnatione, massimamente la fortezza, et molto più Serezanello, rocca malto munita edificata in su'l monte sopra Serezzana, nè poteva dimorare l'esercito in questi luoghi molti dì perche quel paese sterile, et stretto rinchiuso tra'l mare, e'l monte; non bastava a nutrire tanta moltitudine, nè potendo venirui vettovaglie se non di luoghi lontani, non potevano essere a tempo al bisogno presente; da che pareva che le cose del Re potessero facilmente ridursi in non piccole angustie." *Guicciardini, lib.* 1. 28.

(*c*) "Ma era destinato, che, o per beneficio della fortuna, o per ordinatione d'altra piu alta potestà (se però queste scuse meritano l'imprudentie, et le colpe de gli huomini) a tale impedimento sopravenisse rimedio subito, imperò che in Piero de' Medici non fù, nè maggiore animo, nè maggiore costantia nell' avversità, che fosse stata, o moderatione, o prudentia nelle prosperità."

Guicciardini, lib. 1. 28.

(*d*) "Stultâ dissimulatione remedia potius malorum quam mala differebat."

Tacit. Hist. lib. 3. *tom.* 3. 189. 4*to. Paris,* 1771.

fomented the dissentions, and Piero in consternation resolved to secure himself by a negotiation with the enemy, recollecting, in all probability, the example of his father Lorenzo, who had thrown himself into the arms of the King of Naples, and by that means extricated himself from his embarrassments, and saved his country. Yet for examples to produce the same happy consequences, the same circumstances should occur exactly, and the same prudence should direct the same councils.—Piero ought to have remembered the two verses of his Preceptor,

> "Consilio quod agis cupiunt imitarier omnes,
> Laurenti, rerum maxime; nemo potest."

An enterprise succeeds by the spirit, the boldness, or activity of the guiding hand that governs the necessary movements.—It miscarries where meanness, timidity, and indolence are only visible.

Interview with Charles the VIIIth, and disgraceful weakness.

Piero de' Medici went to the French army, and offered Charles, at the first interview, Serezana, Serezanello, Pietra Santa, the citadels of Pisa and Leghorn, and in short all the Florentine fortresses (*e*). The French were even astonished

(*e*) "Introdotto innanzi al Re, et da lui raccolto benignamente più con la fronte, che con l'animo mitigò non poco della sua indegnatione col consentire a tutte le sue dimande chefurono atle, et immoderate, che le fortezze di Pietrasanta, di Serezana,

astonished at his disgraceful weakness; they gazed with wonder on each other's countenance, and eagerly accepted a proposal which relieved them from every difficulty. —When the agreement was arranged they smiled, and gave to Piero the name of "Il Gran Lombardo," or the Great Lombard.—In Piero de' Medici's situation every error must have been a serious one; his was an enormous one.—He was inexcusable for the want of foresight, and he ought to have guarded against being reduced to that degraded state where faults are unavoidable, and where one error only leads to subsequent ones (*f*) of still greater magnitude.

Lodovico Sforza reached the French forces the morning after Piero's arrival, who went to meet him, and gave him to understand that he was come to shew him the way to

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et Serezanello, terre, che da quella parte erano come chiave del dominio Fiorentino, et le fortezze di Pisa, et del porto di Livorno, membri importantissimi del loro stato, si deponessero in mano del Re il quale per uno scrito di mano propria s'obligasse arestituirle, come prima havesse acquistato il Regno di Napoli, procurasse Piero che i Fiorentini li prestassero ducento mila ducati, et il Re gli ricevesse in confederatione, et sotto la sua protettione, delle quali cose, promesse con semplici parole, si differisse a espedirne le scritture in Firenze, per laquale Città il Re intendeva di passare, ma non si differì già la consegnatione delle Fortezze, perche Piero li fece subito consegnare quelle di Serezana, di Pietrasanta, et di Serezanello, et pochi dì poi fu per ordine suo fatto il medesimo di quelle di Pisa et di Livorno, maraviglinandosi grandemente tutti i Francesi, che Piero cosi facilmente havesse consentito a cose di tanta importanza, perche il Re senza dubbio harebbe convenuto con molto minori conditioni." *Guicciardini*, *lib.* 1. 29.

(*f*) "Peribo si non fecero, vapulabo si faxo." *Plautus.*

to the French camp. Sforza, with a sarcastic smile, asked him "if he had not himself mistaken the way, though "he attempted to shew it to others (*g*)."—He resumed afterwards his raillery of Piero, but his own crooked system conducted him in the end also to his ruin.—His extreme caution and consummate perfidy were not able to save him, and he lost the stake for which he was playing so deep and desperate a game.

Returns to Florence, is expelled, and declared a rebel.

Piero, when he had signed the treaty he had agreed on with the French Monarch, returned to Florence.—All was not however over.—The indignation of his fellow-citizens greeted him with the most outrageous and abusive clamours on his arrival, and their rage was not confined within any bounds.—They flew to arms—they shut the palace gates against him—they declared him a rebel—and he was obliged to fly with a few adherents and domestics. His house was pillaged, and those invaluable monuments of antiquity that his father and his grandfather during many years had collected with such unwearied pains, and so much expence, were dispersed in a single day.—Philip de Comines shall give the narrative in his own words.

"Le

(*g*) "Sforza, che arrivò il dì seguente all' escercito, perche scusandosi Piero, che essendo andatogli incontro per honorarlo, l'havere Lodovico fallito la strada, era stato cagione, che la sua andata fosse stata vana rispose molto prontamente: "Vero è, che uno di noi ha fallito la strada, ma sarete forse voi stato quello."

Guicciardini, lib. 1. 29.

"Le Roy entra le lendemain en la cité de Florence, et "luy avoit ledit Pierre fait bailler sa maison, et ja estoit "le Seigneur de Ballassat pour faire ledit logis; lequel "quand il sceut la fuite dudit Pierre de Medicis, se prit "à piller tout ce qu'il trouva en ladite maison, disant "que leur banque à Lion luy devoit grande somme d'ar- "gent, et entre autres choses il prit une Licorne entiere "(qui valoit six ou sept mille Ducats) et deux grandes "pieces d'une autre, et plusieurs autres biens. D'autres "firent comme luy. En une autre maison de la ville "avoit retiré tout ce qu'il avoit vaillant: le peuple pilla "tout. La Seigneurie eut partie des plus riches bagues, "et vingt mille Ducats comptans, qu'il avoit à son banc, "en la ville, et plusieurs beaux pots d'Agatte, et tant de "beaux Camayeux bien taillez, que merveilles, qu'autre- "fois j'avois veus, et bien trois mille medailles d'or et "d'argent, bien la pesanteur de quarante livres, et croy "qu'il n'y avoit point autant de belles medailles en Italie. "Ce qu'il perdit ce jour en la cité, valoit cent mille escus, "et plus (*h*)."

Piero de' Medici, driven from his native country, which his ancestors had governed for sixty years, with as much glory as happiness, at first took refuge at Bologna. The Bentivoglio family received him with great apparent, but unmeaning

(*h*) *Memoires de Messire Philippe de Comines, livre* 7. c. 11. *tom.* 1. 457. 4*to*. 1747.

unmeaning civility, with that cold and formal attention, in which the heart has not any share, though no exception could be taken at it, and as men of the world at present often receive their friends from whom fortune has withdrawn its favours!—Piero de' Medici did not make a long stay with his new hosts, and pushed on to Venice.—Comines was an eye-witness to Piero's situation, and he shall again relate it.

"J'estois à Venise, et par l'Ambassadeur Florentin "estant là, je sceus ces nouvelles, qui bien me desplurent: "car j'avois aimé le pere, et s'il m'eust voulu croire il ne "luy fut point ainsi mesadvenu.——Deux jours aprés vint "ledit Pierre, en pourpoint, ou avec la robbe d'un valet, "et en grande doute le receurent à Venise, tant craignoi-"ent de desplaire au Roy.——Ainsi il vint, et l'allay voir "le lendemain qu'il eut parlé à la Seigneurie, qui le fit "bien loger, et lui permirent porter les armes par la "ville, et à quinze ou vingt serviteurs qu'il avoit: c'est à "sçavoir espées, et luy firént très-grand honneur, com-"bien que Cosme, dont j'ay parlé, les garda autrefois "d'avoir Milan; nonobstant cela, ils l'eurent en remem-"brance, pour l'honneur de sa maison, qui avoit esté en "si grand triomphe et renommée par toute la Chre-"tienté.

"Quand je le vis, me sembla bien qu'il n'estoit point "homme pour respondre. Il me conta au long sa for-

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"tune, et à mon pouvoir le reconfortay. Entre autres "choses me conta comme il avoit perdu le tout, et entre "ses autres malheurs, qu'un sien facteur estant en la ville, "vers qui il avoit envoyé pour avoir des draps pour son "frere et luy, pour cent Ducats seulement, les luy avoit "refusez. Qui estoit grande chose, veu son estat et au-"thorité : car soixante ans avoit duré l'authorité de cette "maison si grande, que plus ne pouvoit (*a*)."

The friends of the unfortunate are retained with difficulty, and the only remedy against ingratitude, which in the hour of distress perhaps inflicts a severer wound than distress itself, is to be benevolent alone from the pure and disinterested principles of benevolence.

Heroic firmness of Niccolò Capponi.

The French King entered Florence at the head of his army the morning after Piero de' Medici had quitted it, and after some animated discussions, the heroic firmness of the citizen Niccolò Capponi terminated the differences with honour to the Florentines (*b*). The Convention with

(*a*) *Memoires de Comines, livre* 7. *c.* 11. *tom.* 1. 455.

(*b*) "Nè mestier fù per uscir dello artiglio
Di un tanto Rè, e non esser vassalli,
Di mostrar puoco core, o men consiglio.
Lo strepito dell' arme e de' cavalli,
Non potè far che non fosse sentita,
La voce d'un Cappon fra cento Galli,

Deaths of Angelo Politiano, Pico de' Mirandula, and Marsilio Ficino.

with the Medici was ratified, and finally concluded.—The same day died Pico de' Mirandula, as if he had sickened at the situation of the House of Medici, and was unwilling to be a witness to its fall.—Angelo Politiano had breathed his last a few months before.—Marsilio Ficino took every precaution to preserve his health, and in his feeble moments had recourse to superstition. And yet he only gained the melancholy satisfaction of surviving almost every illustrious friend!—To a feeling mind the "ULTIMUS SUORUM MORIATUR," of the Romans must have been the most dreadful imprecation!

Cardinal Baronius has endeavoured to persuade his readers, on the testimony of the grandson of Michael Mercatus, the intimate friend of Marsilio Ficino, that the Philosopher had no sooner expired than his spirit, clothed in white, and mounted on a roan horse, galloped through the streets of Florence to his friend's house, who was at his studies, and informed him their ideas of the other world were correct and true; that the spectre then galloped back and disappeared, though Mercatus cried out vociferously, requesting it to stop; and that the apparition was, in consequence of an agreement, subject to the

Tanto chè il Rè superbo fè partita,
Poscia chè la cittade essere intese,
Per mantener sua libertate unita."
Decennale di Machiav.

the pleasure of Omnipotence, by which the first of the two friends who died was to return and acquaint the other of the truth or falsity of Plato's doctrine in his treatise on the immortality of the soul.

Believing only the half of this recital, and supposing the agreement to have been real, and the apparition false, Mercatus would not have been justified in his doubts of the soul's immortality, from his friend's failure in the visit he had promised him.—He might have concluded that the soul, separated from the body, might not recollect a promise made in an earthly state of existence—that there might be a difficulty in the performance—and that it might not be able to accomplish it, either from being unable or unwilling to disobey the inclinations of the Superior Cause, which has cut off all communication between this world and the world of spirits.

Whenever a phenomenon may be explained by three or four different methods, which are equally probable, a just conviction could not perhaps be formed on any single one. A decided proof indeed can only there be given, when every hypothesis, differing from that on which we found a conclusion, is either impossible, or manifestly false. Michael Mercatus was not therefore warranted in inferring the soul's mortality from his friend's failure in his engagement. If such agreements were to be realized once or twice, they would soon become very fre-

quent,

quent, and the barrier which Eternal Wisdom has placed between the two states of existence would be destroyed. Of this however there can be neither fears nor hopes!—Fontenelle has observed the impossibility of an intercourse between the moon and the earth is as certain as of that between the visible and invisible world.—Let us therefore leave the tender Rowe, and the visionary Swedenborg, to amuse themselves with their aerial visitants; let us adore with patient resignation the Great Author of our Being, and in an humble confidence of his mercies let us wait till Death, the great teacher, shall unfold the mystery.

Charles traversed Italy with the rapidity of a traveller, rather than of a conqueror, and whilst the frightful Borgia was obliged to bestow on him the apostolical benediction, the proud and haughty genius of the Arragon trembled in astonishment. Alphonso, who had succeeded Ferdinand in the Neapolitan dominions, cowardly deserted his throne and kingdom, and disappointed the public in the flattering expectations it had formed of him.—The son of Louis the XIth, after being crowned at Naples, meditated no less than a war against the infidels, but Fortune was at last tired with showering down her favours on one who was continually counteracting them by his imprudence.

Ludovico Sforza having attained the end he had in view, changed his system, and entered into a league with the

the Venetians to harass and cut off Charles in his retreat. The French Monarch, in the plenitude of his glory, was under the necessity of returning to his own kingdom, and he found the allied army encamped at Fernova. It endeavoured to dispute his passage, but in vain. "Constat plus sanguinis fusum esse," in the words of Paulus Iovius, "quam duobus antea sæculis in Italiâ," though the combined forces only lost three hundred and fifty men. Such an engagement has not the least resemblance to the murderous battles of our times, where the beasts of prey, the vulture, and the eagle, may satiate themselves more abundantly with their bloody prey!

Piero de' Medici was most extraordinarily in this engagement, and in the French army.—The wretched fugitive, when he left Venice, had been formally banished from its territories, and he attempted to recover Florence by the influence of the very persons who had occasioned his proscription.—The first care of the Florentines on their deliverance from their tyranny had been to settle their new form of government, and the democratical party prevailed through the interest of Savonarola. This celebrated Dominican had acquired an unlimited credit and authority from his eloquence, and his real or pretended piety. When the idea of his inspiration was once well established, not an individual had the audacity to question or resist it.—With a Prophet there is no medium.

um.—He is either stoned or blindly followed.—The popular administration had however introduced anarchy into Florence, and Piero de' Medici had the recovery of the government too much at heart to neglect the least glimpse of an opportunity of attempting it, that presented itself. Depending on the information he had received he assembled a body of troops, and in conjunction with his friend, the famous Bartolomeo D'Alviano, he advanced almost to the city gates. He failed however in his intentions of surprising the city from a mistake in the hour that had been fixed on, the conspiracy was discovered, and the accomplices condemned to die. They appealed to the people, but Savonarola hastened the execution. Yet he had soon reason to repent of it.

Piero de' Medici attempts to recover Florence, and fails.

Savonarola.

As the Monk's prophecies related to the future exploits of Charles the VIIIth, the death of this little Alexander rather shook his credit. He continued however his declamations against the Pope Borgia, and the Holy Father menaced the Florentines with another interdict and excommunication if they did not silence him.—The other Monks of the Order disputed, preached, and prophesied for him and in his name.—One of these violent spiritual brothers, in his zeal for the inspiration of Savonarola, offered to prove the truth of it by a fiery ordeal, provided his antagonist, who was a Minor brother, would agree to the experiment, and the challenge was accepted, at the sacri-

fice

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fice of life (*c*) from the pleasure of revenge.—A sensible and humane proposal was made of plunging the two Ecclesiastics into a vessel of water, and allowing him to be victorious who came out dry.—Both parties treated it as impious and profane.—Every thing was ready for the trial, when an unexpected circumstance put a stop to it. Savonarola insisted his champion should carry the host along with him into the flames.—The proposal was rejected by the whole assembly, but the Prophet's authority was from that moment at an end. The monastery was forced, and he was himself carried to prison. When he was afterwards put to the torture, he confessed his predictions were only founded on the probable interpretations of scripture, and he admitted that prophets do not always speak as prophets.—He was hanged, and afterwards burnt as an impostor, but as he suffered with constancy and resolution, his punishment did not extinguish the difference of opinions respecting him.—The beautiful Latin verses of Flaminius are well known: they are the tribute of elegance and friendship to his memory:

His execution.

"Dum fera flamma tuos Hieronyme pascitur artus,
Relligio sanctas dilaniata comas,
Flevit, et, ô, dixit crudeles parcite Flammæ!
Parcite! sunt ista viscera nostra rogo."

We

(*c*) "Non eo quidem consilio Franciscus Apulus offerebat ignis periculum, quod immunem a conflagratione se fore putaret, (identidem ut ipse jactabat) verum ut adversæ partis defensore pari concrematione consumto, res Hieronymi vana probaretur." *Vita Savonarolæ.*

We have his life written by the Prince I. F. de Mirandula, who was simple and superstitious to excess, and a nephew but little worthy of the illustrious friend of Lorenzo de' Medici.—The work proves that the confession and punishment of the Dominican Monk had made no impression on the faith of his partisans, who continued to believe his mission to have been supernatural.—" I " was informed," the author says, " by the Brother Syl- " vestro, the confidential friend of Savonarola, and his " companion in his martyrdom, that he had often seen " the Holy Ghost descend in the form of a beautiful " dove, its feathers glittering with gold and silver, and " perch upon his shoulder, whilst it cooed in his ear. " —The demons that haunted the convent of St. Mark " were dreadfully afraid of him, and could never pro- " nounce his name without the most ridiculous grimaces. " Two days after his death a child, who was playing on " the side of the Arno, perceived something round, of a " red colour, that appeared to have been burnt, and put- " ting it carefully into his bosom he brought it to his mo- " ther.—It proved afterwards, by many miracles, to be " the Prophet's heart.—By the intercession of my friends, " and the blessing of Providence, I procured a part of " it from the good woman, which I value more than gold " or jewels, from my veneration for the Saint; and it is " rendered still dearer to me from the wonderful cures it " has already operated, and its virtue that I have expe- rienced

"rienced in driving away and keeping off evil spi-"rits (*a*)."

Machiavel was not a person of an understanding capable of being imposed on by such puerilities, and his reflections would be very proper, if the examples he has produced on the subject had been well chosen.

"The Florentines (*b*) do not look upon themselves as either

(*a*) "Sylvester ejus vitæ comes et martyrii consors, roganti mihi de Hieronymi sanctitate, atque obsecranti, ut occulti quippiam proderet in rerum ejus confirmationem (sciebam enim eum multorum secretorum conscium) affirmavit, columbæ speciem, quæ Sancti Spiritus præsentiam gratiamque indicaret, semel atque iterum se vidisse Hieronymi humero insidentem, argenteis aureisque coruscantem pennis, et rostro in aurem ipsius porrecto insusurrantem. —— Dæmones qui vel obsessa corpora vexabant, vel ad hominum terriculamenta per ædes Sancti Marci strepebant, mirum in modum ab aspectu Hieronymi formidabant, nec unquam ejus sincerè nomen præ rabie exprimebant, sed aut litteras invertentes, aut nomen decurtantes, aut in aliud ludicrum alludentes transformabant. —— Biduo post ejus obitum, dum molendino ad Arni ripam puer quidam insisteret, rapi perspexit a fluvio quandam quasi pilam orbicularem puniceam ustulatam, quam sublatam in sinu reposuit, et ad genitricem detulit, quod postea prophetæ cor esse, miraculis multis proditum est. Hujus cordis divino dono, et amicorum charitate et diligentiâ ab eâdem muliere partem obtinuimus, nobis utique et gemmis et auro chariorem, propter viri conjunctissimi amicitiam, sed habuimus longè charissimam gratissimamque, postquam ad ejus præsentiam depulsos morbos, et torta divinitus fugataque dæmonia cognovimus."

(*b*) "Al popolo di Firenze non pare essere nè ignorante nè rozzo; nondimeno da Frate Girolamo Savonarola fù persuaso chè parlava con Dio. Io non voglio giudicare s'egli era vero, o nò, perchè d'un tanto uomo se ne debbe parlare con riverenza. Ma io dico bene che infiniti lo credevano, senza avere visto cosa nessuna straordinaria da farlo loro credere, perchè la vita sua, la dottrina, il soggetto che prese,

" either rude or ignorant people; and yet they were " prevailed upon by Girolamo Savonarola to believe, " that he conversed with God. For my own part, I will " not pretend to determine whether that was true or not; " because so great a man ought not to be spoken of, but " with the utmost reverence: this, however, I will take " upon me to say, that many thousands believed it, who " never saw him perform any thing miraculous, that " might be a good foundation for such an opinion: his " life, doctrine, and manner of conversation, being " sufficient, as they thought, to convince them (*c*)."

" All the prophets (*d*), who were supported by an armed " force, succeeded in their undertakings: whilst, on the " contrary, those that had not such a force to trust to, " were defeated and destroyed: for besides what has " been already said, it is the nature of mankind to be fic- " kle and inconstant in their opinions; and though it may " be

erano sufficienti a fargli prestare fede." *Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di T. Livio, lib.* 1. c. 11.—*Opere di Machiavelli. tom.* 3. 45.

(*c*) *Farneworth's Machiavel, vol.* 2. 39. 4to. 1762.

(*d*) "Tutti li Profeti armati vinsono, e li disarmati rovinarono; perchè oltre le cose dette, la natura de' popoli è varia, ed è facile a persuadere loro una cosa, ma è difficile fermargli in quella persuasione. E però conviene essere ordinato in modo, che quando non credono più, si possa far loro credere per forza. Moisè, Ciro, Teseo, e Romulo, non arebbono possuto fare osservare lungamente le loro costituzioni, se fussero stati disarmati; come ne' nostri tempi intervenne a frate Girolamo Savona-

"be an easy matter to persuade them to believe a thing "at first, it is very difficult to keep them long in that "persuasion: upon which account, it is necessary to be "so appointed, as to be in a condition to make them be- "lieve by force, when they will no longer believe of "themselves. Neither Moses, nor Cyrus, nor Theseus, "nor Romulus, could ever have caused their institutions "to have been long observed, if they had not been arm- "ed: in our own times Girolamo Savonarola the Domi- "nican was destroyed when the multitude began to fall "off from him, because he had neither power to keep "those steady in their persuasion, who acknowledged "his mission, nor to make others believe who denied "it (*e*)."

"Whoever (*f*) reads the Bible with attention, will see "that Moses, in order to establish his laws, was obliged to "put many people to death, who opposed him out of en- "vy.

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rola, il quale rovinò ne' suoi ordini nuovi, come la moltitudine cominciò a non credergli, e lui non aveva il modo da tenere fermi quelli che avevano creduto, nè a far credere i discredenti." *Il Principe*, c. 6.—*Opere di Machiavelli*. *tom*. 3. 415.

(*e*) *Farneworth's Machiavel*, *vol*. 1. 541.

(*f*) "Chi legge la Bibbia sensatamente, vedrà Moisè esser stato sforzato, a voler che le sue leggi e gli suoi ordini andassero innanzi, ad ammazzare infiniti uomini, i quali non mossi da altro che da invidia, si opponevano ai disegni suoi. Questa necessità conosceva benissimo frate Girolamo Savonarola, conoscevala ancora Pietro Soderini Gonfaloniere di Firenze. L' uno non potette vincerla, per non avere autorità a poterlo fare, che fu il frate, e per non esser inteso bene da coloro che lo

"vy. Girolamo Savonarola, and Pietro Soderini, Gonfalonier of Florence, likewise saw the necessity of acting in this manner: but the former being only a Friar could not do it, because he had not sufficient authority; and such of his followers as had, did not rightly comprehend his meaning; though that was not his fault, for his sermons were full of exclamations and invectives against the WISE MEN OF THIS WORLD, a name which he gave to those that envied him and opposed his measures (*g*)."

Many Protestants, influenced perhaps by the authority of Luther, who honoured the Dominican Monk with the supposition that he had prepared the way for him, or dazzled by Savonarola's spiritual declamations against the See of Rome, and taking their ideas from his apparent sanctity of manners, have formed too advantageous an opinion of this specious hypocrite (*h*).—Mosheim, whose senti-

seguitavano, che ne arebbono avuto autorità. Nondimeno per lui non rimase, e le sue prediche sono piene di accuse dei savi del mondo, e d' invettive contro a loro, perchè chiamava così questi invidi, e quelli che si opponevano agli ordini suoi."
Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di T. Livio, lib. 3. c. 30.—Opere di Machiavelli, tom. 3. 347.

(*g*) *Farneworth's Machiavel. vol.* 2. 344, 345.

(*h*) Guicciardini seems to have left a candid and rational account of him, with his usual impartiality. "Fù dipoi esaminato con tormenti, benche non molto gravi, il Savonarola, et sull'esamine pubblicato un processo, ilquale rimovendo tutte le calunnie, che gli erano state date, o di avaritia, o di costumi inhonesti, o d'havertenuto pratiche occulte con Principi, conteneva, le cose predette da lui, essere state predette, non per rivelatione divina, ma per opinione propria fondata su la dottrina,

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sentiments are preferable to those of an hundred inferior scholars, mentions him in various parts of his Ecclesiastical History, and always with respect, and his English translator Dr. Maclaine, whose judgment is equivalent in every sense to that of Mosheim, appears to have adopted these sentiments from his not having made a single observation on them (*i*).—That he was a great man and a genius

His character.

et observatione della scrittura sacra; nè essersi mosso per fin maligno, o per cupidità d'acquistare con questo mezzo grandezza Ecclesistica, ma bene haver desiderato, che per opora sua si convocasse il Concilio universale, nel quale si riformassero i costumi corroti del Clero: et lo stato della Chiesa di Dio, tanto trascorso: si ridusse in più similitudine, che fosse possibile a' tempi, che furono promessi a' tempi de gli Apostoli: la qual gloria di dar perfettione a tanto, et si salutare opera havere stimato molto più, che'l conseguire il Ponteficato, perche quello non poteva succedere, se non per mezzo d'eccellentissima dottrina, et virtù di sigolar riverenza, che gli havessero tuttigli huomini; ma il Pontificato ottenersi spesso, ò con male arti, ò per beneficio di fortuna; sopra ilqual processo conformato da lui in presenza di molti religiosi, etiandio del suo ordine: ma con parole (s'è vero quel che poi divulgarono i suoi seguaci) concise, et da poter recevere diverse interpretationi: gli furono per sententia del General di S. Domenico, et del Vescovo Romolino, che fù poi Cardinale di Surrente, Commessarii deputati dal Pontefice, insieme con gli altri due Frati, aboliti, con le cerimonie instituite dalla Chiesa Romana, gli ordini sacri, et lasciato in potestà della corte secolare, dalla quale furono impiccati, et abbruciati, concorrendo allo spettacolo della degradatione, et del supplicio, non minore moltitudine d'huomini, ohe'l dì destinato afare l'esperimento d'entrar nel fuoco, fosse concorso nel luogo medesimo all'espettation del mi racolo promesso da lui; laqual morte sopportata con animo costante, ma senza esprimer parola alcuna, che significasse ò il delitto, ò l'innocentia, non spense la verità de' giudicii, et delle passioni de gli huomini; perche molti lo riputarono ingannatore, molti per lo contrario credettono, ò che la confessione, che si pubblicò fosse stata falsamente fabbricata; ò che nella complessione sua molto delicata havesse potuto più la forza de' tormenti, che la verita." *La Historia d' Italia, di Guicciardini, lib.* 3. 100.

(*i*) It appears from this passage that Mons[r.] Tenhove was surprised to see the zealot Savonarola commended without restriction by Dr. Mosheim, and this commendation passing without animadversion in the notes of his English Translator.—On

nius of the first rate may be readily allowed, but judging of him with candour and without prejudice, we can only bestow on him a degree of respect that is lowered by many exceptionable and horrid parts of his character and conduct.—During the course of many years his name and his prophecies were the signal under which the enemies of the House of Medici rallied their forces, and his influence continued with his followers when his ashes had been long scattered by the winds.

Florence at last, sick of its democracy, the single form of government without any exception whatever, from which no one possible advantage can be derived, and wearied out with its fluctuations from one misfortune to another, the necessary consequences of a government without order, made an essential change in the form of its republic by the election of a standing and per-

my mentioning this circumstance to Dr. Maclaine, from whose learning I have reaped much information, and to whose society I owe many pleasant hours, he observed "that Savonarola was certainly a man of learning and piety, but, that living at a period of time, when learning and piety were degraded by foul mixtures, fanaticism, ambition, scholastic jargon, and pious frauds, he was not exempt from their contagion. It is, however, well known, that, with all his faults, he was favoured and applauded by the most eminent men of his time, such as Marsilio Ficino, Pico de Mirandula, and others. He was one of the most vehement opposers of the House of Medici, and this gave to his religious zeal a peculiar aspect of atrocity in the eyes of Mons[r]. Tenhove. He was, no doubt, an ambitious, arrogant, and troublesome priest; but it would not be fair to stigmatize him as a hypocrite or an impostor. He was, properly speaking, an enthusiast, and one of the most dangerous and turbulent of that class."

perpetual Gonfalonier. Pietro Soderini was chosen by his fellow-citizens, a person of great prudence and moderation, and what had perhaps some weight in the election, he had not any family that might afterwards aspire to the same hereditary honour.

Piero de' Medici, wandering from place to place, and perpetually labouring to regain the situation he had lost by his imprudence, wasted himself in fruitless projects. Some of his partisans surprised Arezzo, though it was not attended with the advantage they expected from it, as their hopes from their connections with Cæsar Borgia ended in disappointment. Others followed the fortune of the French arms. Louis the XIIth and Ferdinand the Catholic entered into a league for the conquest of the kingdom of Naples, which the Arragon family had again taken possession of, and they succeeded with great ease. Disagreeing, however, respecting a division of the spoil, a fresh war was kindled in that corner of Italy. The abilities of the great Gonsalva gave a decided superiority to the Spanish troops, and Piero de' Medici was drowned in crossing the Garigliano (*k*), the Liris of the Ancients,

Death of Piero de' Medici.

(*k*) " Maggiore infortunio hebbono Piero de' Medici, che seguitavano il campo de Francesi, et alcuni altri Gentilhuomini, i quali essendo nella leucta dell' essercito dal Garigliano saliti sopra una barca con quattro pezzi d' artiglieria per condurli a Gaeta, per troppo peso et perche hebbono i venti contrarii alla foce del fiume, andata sotto la barca, annegarono tutti." (*Guicciardini*, *lib*. 6. 170.) Paulus Iovius gives nearly the same account and adds, " Hoc ignobile mortis genus ei meritò accidisse plerique existimabunt, quod in morte Laurentii patris Leonium illustrem

Ancients, after an action in which his friends the French had been defeated (*a*).—His premature fate deprived him of the consolation, if revenge can possibly be any consolation, of seeing his greatest enemy Ludovico Sforza betrayed by the most faithful of nations, and dying in a dungeon hollowed out of a wall, the victim of his crimes, and the most miserable of men!

Piero de' Medici's monument is in the Abbey of Monte Cassino, but the Abbé of Abbés, the Patriarch of the Holy Religion, and the Prince of Peace, the titles of the Superior of this convent, could not give the body a place within his consecrated ground, and the Garigliano still continues to whiten or corrode his bones.—

" —— Liris

Medicum indignum prorsus ea immanitate, ut de infelici curatione pœnam exigeret, in puteum precipitasse crederetur." (*Illust. Viror. Elog. lib.* 4. 170.)—The Historian was free from prejudices, the Roman Catholic Prelate could not get rid of the superstition of the age.

(*a*) Brantome appears to have traversed the field of battle, and to have seen in imagination the mournful shades of his slaughtered countrymen rising up before him. " Hélas! j'ay veu ces lieux-là derniers, et mesme le Garillan, et c'estoit sur le tard à soleil couchant, que les ombres et les manes commencent, à s'apparoistre comme fantosmes, plutost qu'aux autres heures du jour, où il me sembloit que ces ames généreuses de nos braves François là-morts s'eslevoient sur la terre, et me parloient, et quasi me respondoient sur les plaintes que je faisois de leur combat et de leur mort, eux accusant et maugréant par million de fois les endroits de-là couverts de marais; mal avantageux pour la cavallerie et gendarmerie Françoise, qui ne peut-là si bien combattre comme elle fit ailleurs." *Œuvres de Brantome, tom.* 4. 81, 82.

"———— Liris quietâ
Mordet aquâ taciturnus Amnis (*b*)."

He left by Alfonsina d'Ursino, a restless and ambitious woman, a son and a daughter, Lorenzo and Clarice de' Medici, and we shall hereafter find his death (*c*) to have been

(*b*) *Horat. Carmin. lib.* 1. 31.

(*c*) Piero de' Medici has not been represented by any of the històrians in a very favourable point of view, yet in forming an accurate and impartial judgment of his character, we should recollect the times in which he lived, and the difficulties he had to encounter. The former seem to have been forgotten, and the latter not sufficiently considered. He certainly however wanted that vigour of mind which enables us to act decisively on trying occasions, and that firmness so necessary for his situation amidst the convulsions which then distracted Florence. In a less tempestuous season, and in a government more firmly established, his fate would probably have been very different. His poetical compositions bespeak some talents, and one of them, Mr. Roscoe has justly observed, places his filial affection and attachment to his native city in a very interesting light.—With me they are virtues which atone for a multitude of foibles.

SONETTO.

"'Sendo io national, e di te nato,
Muovati patria un poco il tuo figliuolo;
Fingiti almen pietosa del suo duolo,
Essendo in te nudrito ed allevato.
Ha ciaschedun del nascimento il fato,
Come l'uccello il suo garrire e volo;
Scusemi almen in ciò non esser solo,
Benchè solo al mio male io pur sia stato.
Et se può nulla in te mio antico affetto,
Per quella pietà ch 'n te pur regna
Non mi sia questo dono da te disdetto;

been the most advantageous event for the happiness of the Medici Family. CHAP. VI.

—Ch' almen in cener nella patria io vegna,
A riposar col padre mio diletto,
Che già ti fe si gloriosa e degna."

SONNET.

"Thy offspring, FLORENCE, nurtur'd at thy breast,
Ah let me yet thy kind indulgence prove;
Or if thou own no more a parent's love,
Thy pity sure may sooth my woes to rest.
Fate marks to each his lot: the same behest
That taught the bird through fields of air to rove,
And tunes his song, my vital tissue, wove
Of grief and care, with darkest hues imprest.
But if, my fondness scorn'd, my prayer denied,
Death only bring the period of my woes,
Yet one dear hope shall mitigate my doom.
—If then my father's name was once thy pride,
Let my cold ashes find at last repose,
Safe in the shelter of his honoured tomb."

The Original has great simplicity and great beauty—in the translation they are united with great elegance.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.